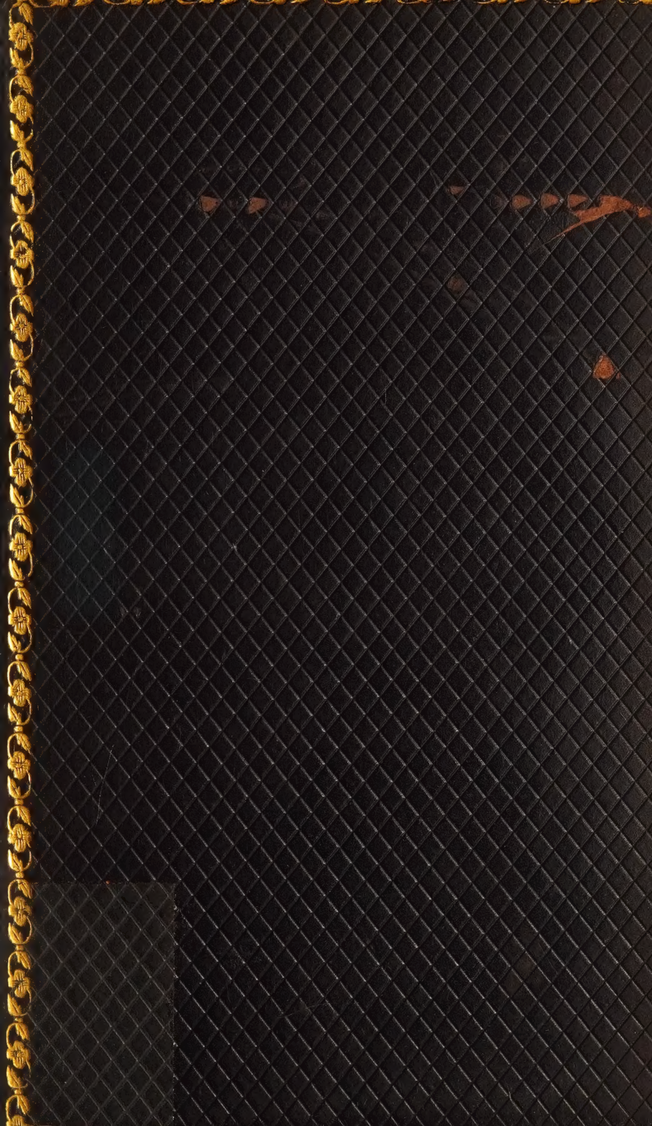

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OR,

AGES OF FAITH.

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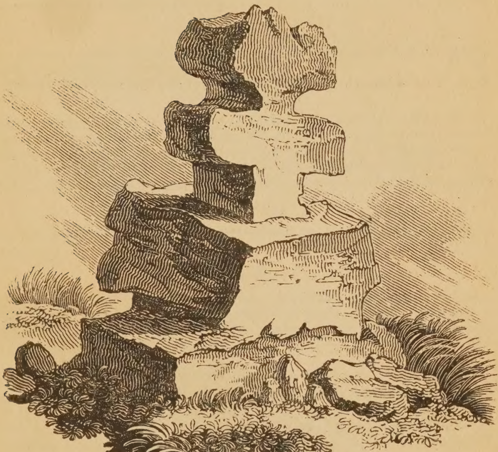
BOOK X.



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MORES CATHOLICI;

OR,

AGES OF FAITH.

THE TENTH BOOK.

CHAPTER I.

The ancients used to say, as we find from the Gorgias of Plato, that it was not lawful to break off in the middle of a narrative, and leave it without a head, lest it should wander about spectre-like in that condition. In accordance with this Athenian fancy, which happens here to coincide with graver motives, we must proceed to place, as it were, the head on our last history, by commemorating a particular class of persons, who in a still more peculiar manner fulfilled the divine prophecy, "Sedebit populus meus in pulchritudine pacis, in tabernaculis fiduciæ, et in requie opulenta [*]," and whose lives seem to have been especially foreshown by the same great voice, declaring, "Opus justitiæ pax: cultus justitiæ silentium et securitas usque in sempiternum." My theme pursuing then, I have to speak of the multitudes whose steps the cloister guarded during ages of faith; for without an intimate acquaintance with their lives and customs, our history would be incomplete, and as it were headless; since, after all, it was chiefly in monasteries that peace found its sincerest worshippers, and the most devoted ministers to dispense and propagate it on earth; for it was within their walls that all we have hitherto seen of peace and of pacific influence existed in the fullest perfection. Now lest any one should imagine that an inquiry into the spirit and manners of this separate world, (for the monastic life, in fact, constituted a world in itself,) would lead us aside to consider things of secondary importance to the general society of men, let us begin by observing the immense and universal character of these great institutions: for this people, so peculiarly seated in the beauty and plenitude of peace, was not confined to any one locality or nation; it was spread over the whole earth, and no place was left without the tranquillizing influence of its philosophy and of its manners. Without attempting to trace the progress of the monastic orders, some estimate of their diffusion may be formed from the incidental notices respecting them, which occur in any of the local historians of the middle ages.

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[*] Is. xxxii.

In the cloistral community of Oryrynchus were 10,000 monks. They served besides twelve parish-churches for the people, whose manners were so formed by them, that the whole city seemed one church. In Hermopolis were 500 monks; at Nitria their number amounted to 5000; at Cellia to 2000. But confining our view to the western church, we find that in the monastery of St. Finnian, at Clonard, in Ireland, in which St. Columbkill studied, there were at one time 3000 monks. The abbey of Bangor, near Carrickfergus, founded about the year 555, and restored by St. Malachias after its destruction by the Danes, of which St. Bernard says, "a place truly holy, and fruitful in saints, most plentifully producing fruit to God," from which came St. Columban and St. Gall, contained before the death of its founder, St. Comgal, 4000 monks. In Bangor, in Wales, there were eight divisions, each of 300 monks. In the year 900, there were more than 1000 monks in the abbey of St. Sylvester, at Nonantula. The abbey of Jumiège, soon after its foundation by St. Philibert and queen Bathilde, contained 900 monks; many bishops, clerks, and noble laics, retiring thither to renounce the world. In the abbey of Fulda, under Raban Maur, there were more than 370 monks, when Count Erlafried sent thither for monks to place in Hirschau *. In the twelfth century, under St. Peter the Venerable, there were in the monastery of Cluny nearly 400 monks, besides an immense number of guests, and a multitude of poor.

In the twelfth century, Orderic Vitalis says, "that the

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* Trithem. in Chronic. Hirsch.

Venerable Hugo, Abbot of Cluny, during the sixty-four years of his rule, admitted more than 10,000 monks into the ranks of the Lord's host *." The same author relates that on the day of his own ordination at Rouen, the army of Christ was augmented by nearly 700 clerks, who received different orders †. Brother Jordan of Saxony, the second general of the Dominicans, gave the habit to more than a thousand men, whom he alone had gained to the order.

In the thirteenth century, we find in Milan 140 friars in the Dominican, and 100 in the Franciscan convent ‡. In the same city at that time there were sixty hermits of St. Augustin, and thirty Carmelites §. The proportions were about the same elsewhere: when Mabillon visited the abbeys of Einsiedeln and St. Gall, there were 100 monks in each, besides novices ||. Before the revolution in 1524, eighteen monasteries and churches were in the single town of Eisenach, which were destroyed in one day. From these few statements it is evident, that the religious orders embraced an immense part of the population, and, therefore, we should certainly be unable to form any just estimate of the number of men who loved and enjoyed peace in the middle ages, if we did not take into account these immense and widely-spread communities of the professed pacific.

We have seen what dark calamitous times afflicted the Holy Church while reaping the immortal fruits of faith. In the year 480, when St. Benedict was born, the aspect of Europe was deplorable. Italy groaned under the yoke of Odoacre, Spain and Aquitaine under that of Alaric, both of them Arian Princes, that is, at enmity with truth, the fountain of peace. Gallacia was subject to the Arian Suevi; Childeric, king of the Francs, was an idolator. The Burgundians, who were Arians, occupied not a small part of Gaul; and Germany, with a part of Britain, were ignorant of the true God. This was, nevertheless, the moment when the holy institute of St. Benedict arose, which was founded about the year 529, on Mount Cassino, where, according to the remark of Mabillon, there was provided a safe asylum against

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* Lib. xi.

† Ibid.

‡ Gualvanei de la Flamma, Hist. Med. ap. Mur. Rer. It. Script. xi.

§ Annales Mediol. c. 59, ap. id. xvi.

|| Iter Germanicum.

human misery *. Long afterwards the state of Europe, in regard to peace, continued to be calamitous. Gaul, in particular, was ruled with a rod of iron; and Europe generally, in the seventh century, was so distracted, that Pope Agatho, in the name of the Roman Synod, claiming indulgence for the diminished literary glory of the Western Church, uses these affecting, and, as Mabillon says, truly golden words. "Since in our regions the fury of different nations rages daily, at one time conflicting, at another traversing, at another ravaging—our whole life is full of solicitude—Et sola est nostra substantia fides nostra, cum qua nobis vivere summa est gloria." But all the while, where the evil perhaps was greatest, under the terrible sceptres of Childebert, Clotaire I., Chilperic, Clotaire II., and Dagobert I., warlike kings, for whom the French, at that time still ferocious, evinced an astonishing sympathy, and a fidelity unalterable; there were existing the peaceful multitudes to whom monasteries gave both peace and the means of its propagation. Even secular historians remark, that while the spirit of discord pervaded countries, as in Ireland, arming the natives against each other, immense multitudes of the inhabitants of those countries enjoyed and worshipped peace in the seclusion of monasteries: for though to many unknown, these tranquil communities existed in the midst of the disorders and troubles of the worldly life. The true lovers of peace were, however, generally led to discover them, like St. Augustine, who says, "I was astonished when I heard them speak of this great Monk Anthony, of whom I had known nothing till that hour. I was filled with amaze, hearing of his recent memory and his miracles so near our time in testimony to the faith of the Catholic Church. Then the conversation turned upon the multitude of monasteries, and the solitary holy men of the desert, of whom we had known nothing. There was a monastery at Milan, full of good men, without the walls of the city, under the care of St. Ambrose, and we did not know of its existence †." Thus too, no doubt, it was in Gaul, while cruel Merovingians reigned. Then when the gloom had passed, under the Carlovingians, cities yielded

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* Mabillon, Præfat. in 1 sæc. Benedic. ii.

† Confess. lib. viii. 6.

in importance and influence to abbeys, which were like great castles, fortified, containing all things requisite for a regular and pacific life. In the work entitled, "Gallia Christiana," one is astonished to see the prodigious number of abbeys and convents in the cities of France. Hence an ancient writer cries—

"Felix regio Francorum,
Parens fœcunda tantorum
Benedicti militum *."

"If any thing," says one historian, "could reconcile the eyes of humanity to the pictures offered by the first ages of our monarchy, it would be without doubt those spontaneous unions of pacific men, who fled from a corrupted and desolated society, in order to meditate on a better world, to preserve kindled for future generations the torch of truth †."

But what Christian land was left without this happiness? "The drama of history," says a recent historian of Ireland, speaking of very early times, "begins to assume an entirely different character. Instead of the ferocious strife of kings and chieftains, we have the pure and peaceful triumphs of religion. Illustrious saints of both sexes pass in review before our eyes; the cowl and veil eclipse the glory even of the regal crown, and instead of the grand and festive halls of Tara and Emania, the lonely cell of the fasting penitent becomes the scene of fame." So that, in fact, during the most disturbed periods of the middle ages, no warrior could ever reduce men who really loved peace to the dilemma in which Cæsar places the people of Marseilles, saying—

"At enim contagia belli
Dira fugant: dabitis pœnas pro pace petita;
Et nihil esse meo discetis tutius ævo,
Quam, duce me, bellum ‡."

For, in consequence of the foundations of faith, subjects as the sons of a great family were always at liberty to choose and follow either peace or its opposite. "Gista,

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* Anonym. Carthusianis de Religion. Origine ap. Martene Vet. Script. Collect. tom. vi.

† Langlois Essai Hist. sur l'Abbaye de Fontenelle.

‡ Lucan, iii.

widow of Earl Godwin, had seven sons," says Orderic Vitalis, "Suenon, Tostic, Herald, Guorth, Elfgar, Leofwin, and Vulvod; all were earls distinguished by great personal beauty and merits, though their ends were different. Elfgar and Vulvod, who loved God, lived holily and happily; the first, a pilgrim and monk, died at Rheims in the true faith; the other died honourably at Salisbury. The five others, devoted to arms, perished in different places by the sword*."

The prodigious number of disciples which each worshipper of peace drew after him from the first moment of his conversion, is a fact which sufficiently indicates the attractions possessed by this society distinct from that of the world, though ever in the midst of it. The blessed youth Francis de Paula, for instance, in 1435, retires into a cave in a desert place, and lo! Balthazar, Bernardino, Paulus, Francis, Antonius, Andrew, Archangelo, Nicholaus, Angelo, Nicholas a Nucito, John and Florentinus follow him†. How should we be detained, if we were to speak of the multitudes leading the pacific life in the more celebrated regions in monastic history? Such, for example, as Suabia, which the historians of St. Gall style "the land of the saints‡." St. Peter Damian says, "That the whole world was full of monks§;" that is, of men who loved, enjoyed, and propagated peace. Places of monastic retreat existed almost from the beginning of the Church‖. There were monks in Gaul before the time of St. Martin; for there were some in the island of St. Barbara above the confluence of the Arar and the Rhone, who received the Christians that fled from the persecution of Septimus Severus¶. How many arose in Sicily in the earlier times may be witnessed in the histories of that island**, where the ancient Greek monasteries were rebuilt by Counts Robert and Roger, on the expulsion of the Saracens, as were the six Benedictine abbeys founded there by St. Gregory the Great, out of his own patrimony††. Mount Ætna, that had been formerly devoted to the vain worship of the Gentiles, was in the first Christian ages covered with monasteries for the worship of the one true God *. Calabria—which was the first part of Italy, after Rome, to embrace the Christian faith, St. Paul having preached at Rhegium, and which produced so many martyrs in early and modern times,—became another Egypt in regard to monasteries. It is delightful to survey in local histories the celebrated monasteries of this region, so abundantly endowed, and producing such wise and holy men, who threw in the shade those old Pythagoræan days among that illustrious people; to visit this grave of St. Benedict, St. Basil, and St. Bernard, this mother of hermits dwelling amidst her rocks and woods, and odoriferous hills †. In the fourth and fifth centuries, the Italian monasteries were built chiefly in Milan, Rome, Ravenna, Nola, in Campagna, and in the islands of the Etruscan sea ‡. How prodigiously these were multiplied in later times, may be estimated from the number of monasteries visited by Ferdinand Ughelli, the Florentine monk and abbot of the Tria Fontana, at Rome, when he was composing his great work, the "Italia Sacra." But, extending our view over Europe, let us recall the names and site of a few of the most eminent of these great asylums of pacific men in ages of faith. The tracks of the Great Benedict lead from Subiaco to blest Casino's holy hill, both such places of divine peace.

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* Lib. iii.

† Chronic. Ord. Minimorum.

‡ Eckehard IV. in lib. Benedict.

§ Lib. vi. Epist. 15.

‖ Murat. Antiq. It. lxv.

¶ Mab. Præf. in iii. sæc.

** Sicilia Sacra, i. 22.

†† Id. ii.

Passing over these, Italy for many ages gloried in her abbeys of Pomposa, in the duchy of Ferrara, two leagues from the sea, near the south branch of the Po; of Nonantula, ten miles from Modena, founded in 752 by Anselm, Duke of Friuli, whose sister Giseltrude was wife of Aistulph, King of the Langobards; of Cluse in Piemont, which in the middle of the tenth century deserved to be compared with Cluny; of St. Peter a Cœlo-aureo in Pavia; of St. Justina at Padua; of St. John the Evangelist at Parma; of St. George at Venice, where Mauroseni, one of the companions of Romuald, was Abbot; of St. Peter at Mantua; of St. Maria in Florence; of St. Appollinare in Classe, near Ravenna; of St. Lorenzo at Capua; of Camaldoli and Vallembrosa, in the Appenines; of Cava in the country of Salerno, 5000 paces from the city at the foot of Mount Fenetra which Muratory reckons

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* ii. 1155.

† Italia Sacra, tom. ix. 175.

‡ Murat. Antiq. It. lxv.

the second in importance, after Mount Casino. *) Turning to Gaul, we find at a short distance from Poitiers, at a spot called Lignge, the first convent built by St. Martin, which continued to the last times to produce many eminent men. On becoming Bishop of Tours, he built a second abbey two miles from the city, which was the celebrated house of Marmoutier, the great nursery of bishops, and the school of science in France. It was here that St. Martin was entombed: the abbey bearing his name at Amiens was on the site of the house where the saint resided, while yet a soldier †. St. Benedict on the Loire, in the village of Fleury,—founded by Leudebod in the reign of Clotaire II. in 623, possessing the body of St. Benet, renowned in the tenth century, under most holy and learned abbots, and resorted to by multitudes of youth from all countries, attracted by the fame of Constantine the Scholastic,—was in the diocese of Orleans, eight leagues from that city. Aniane founded by St. Benet, son of the Count of Maguelore, and especially protected by Charlemagne, was seated in a valley on the little river Aniane, in the diocese of Montpellier, between that city and Lodéve. At a league distance was the monastery of Gello, or of St. William of the Desert, founded by William, Duke of Aquitaine, one of the peers of Charlemagne. The Abbey of St. Lucien, founded by Childeric, was at Beauvais. Luxeuil was in Franche-comté, in the diocese of Besançon, at the foot of the mountains of the Vosge towards Lorraine. After leaving this his first foundation in Gaul, St. Columban founded the monastery of Dissentis in the Rhetian Alps, in a desert 4000 feet above the level of the sea, and subsequently Bobbio at the foot of the Appenines, at which you arrive by a road from Chiavera. The abbey of St. Germain des Prèz, founded soon after the death of the holy patriarch of the order ‡, was at the extremity of the gardens of the Royal Palace in a suburb of Paris. Corby, in Piccardy, whence such great lights issued in ancient times, was three leagues distant from Amiens. St. Riquier was two leagues from Abbeville, which was originally but the villa or farmhouse of the abbey §. Ferrers, of which Lupus was abbot

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* Mur. Rer. It. Script. vi. † Voyage Lit. de Deux Bénéd.

‡ D. Bouillart Hist. de l'Abb. de S. Ger.

§ Topographie des Saints.

in 843, was a monastery in the diocese of Sens, four miles from Montargis, on the road to Lyons. Vezelay, founded in the ninth century by Count Gerard de Rousillon, so celebrated in old romance, was eight leagues distant from Auxerre. Aureliac, founded by St. Gerald, Count of Aurelia, was in the diocese of Clermont. On seeing that little islet of Lerins, on the coast of Antibes, with its arid fields and its meagre tufts of pines, one could never divine the part which this spot of earth played in the history of Christianity in Gaul from the year 410, when St. Honorat first retired to a hermitage there. But here stood the renowned monastery which was built soon after, from which so many saints were drawn. Bec, founded by Herluin, in 1040, where Lanfranc and Anselm were priors, was in the diocese of Rouen, on the little river Bec, eight leagues west from that city. Faremoutier, founded by St. Fare in 617, was in Brie, on the river Morin, five leagues from Meaux. Flay was in the diocese of Beauvais. Fontevrauld was on the borders of Poitou towards Anjou, in the diocese of Poitiers. Liessies, where Louis of Blois was abbot, founded in 751 by Count Wigbert, is in the diocese of Cambray, in Hainault, five miles from Avennes. Premontré, chosen by St. Norbert for the central house of his order, was in a valley in the forest of Coucy, in the diocese of Laon, which was a desert in the beginning of the twelfth century.

Cisteaux, the mother house of the order, founded by Odo, Duke of Burgundy, in 1098, was five leagues from Dijon, in the diocese of Chalons. La Ferté was the first branch house, founded by the Seigneurs de Vergy. The second was at Pontigny, in Champagne, on the river Serain, one league from Ligny-le-Chateau, and four-and-a-half from Auxerre. The third daughter was Clairvaulx, founded in 1115, by Thibaud, Count of Champagne. This abbey stood on the river Aube. Morimond, the fourth daughter, founded in 1115 by Odolricus de Agrimont, was on the borders of Lorraine and Burgundy. From these four houses all the Cistercian abbeys in the world took their origin *. Molesme was in Champagne, three leagues from Chatillon-sur-Seine. Cluny was on the river Grone, on the borders of the duchy of Burgundy, five leagues from Mâcon, and fifteen from Lyons.

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* Notitiæ Abbat. Ord. Cist. per Universum Orbem, lib. i.

Paray-le-Monial was in Charolais; St. Selectus was near Narbonne; Bourgeul was on the Loire; Malliac, founded in 990, was near Poitiers; St. Columban was in Sens: St. Maglor, founded in 979, and St. Mary des Champs, in 994, were in Paris: and St. Albin, founded in 966, was in Anjou. Of the origin of the Spanish monasteries, which was later, writers of that kingdom give us this account. They relate, that in the sixth century, Donatus, a monk and disciple of a certain hermit in Africa, foreseeing the violence of the barbarous nations, fled in a ship into Spain with seventy monks and a quantity of manuscripts. In Spain he was received by an illustrious and religious woman, Minicea, and there he built the monastery of Servitanum, which was the first monastery in Spain*. Of these I shall only mention the monastery of Alcoba, so magnificent, so fruitful in learning, so venerable in antiquity, "in which," says John of Bruges, "you discern the authority and sanctity of St. Bernard, and the grandeur of Kings Alfonso and Henry†."

Among the German monasteries of renown, the site of a few of the most illustrious must be present to every one's recollection. "The most celebrated," as Trithemius says, "were Fulda, founded by St. Boniface, in Franconia towards Hesse and Thuringia. The abbey of St. Peter and St. Paul in Weissenburg, in the diocese of Spires, founded by King Dagobert; that of St. Alban, near Mayence, founded by ancient kings of France; that of St. Gall in Suabia; that of Reichnaw, near Constance, founded by Pirminius, disciple of St. Maur; that of Hirsfeld, four miles from Fulda, founded by St. Lullus; that of St Mathias, near Treves, the most ancient of all the Teutonic houses; Mediolacensis, in Lorraine, founded by St. Lutwin, who from being duke became a monk and abbot, and Archbishop of Treves; the abbeys of St. Maurice at Dolegia, in the diocese of Treves; that of Stavelot, in the diocese of Liege, four leagues from Spa, of immense fame; that of New Corby, in Saxony, founded by the Abbot of Corby, in Piccardy, from which came forth apostles to many nations; that of St. Maximinus, near the walls of Treves, which some think existed in the time of Constantine, and in which certainly there were monks in the time of St. Augustine; the abbey of Prum, in the forest of Ardennes, in a valley on the little river Prum, founded in 721 by Bertrade, grandmother of Berta, wife of King Pepin, who had a castle one league from the place, of which Assuerus, Count of Anjou, was the first abbot, and Hirschau, eight miles from Spires, founded in 830 by Erlafred, Count of Calba, with his sons Nottung and Ermendred, and restored by Pope Leo IX., who was of the family of Dagburgh, and Adelbert, Count of Calba, with Wiltrude, his most devout wife*.

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* Hildephons. Vitæ Illust. Episcop. Hisp.

† Joan. Vasæi Brug. Rer. Hispan. Chronic. iii.

Other great Teutonic houses were Gembloux, in a hollow four leagues to the north-west from Namur, founded in 992 by St. Guibert, seigneur de Gembloux, who formed it out of the castle in which he was born. Villers, one of the most illustrious abbeys, not only of Brabant, but of the whole Cistercian order, on account of the great men it has given to the church, seated in a gorge between two mountains, on the way to Nivelle. the Benedictine Abbey of St. Vaast at Arras, which dated from the seventh century, when the successor of St. Aubert, bishop of Arras, built it over the oratory where the saint was buried; Lobes, founded in 540 by St. Landelin on the Sambre, four leagues from Philippeville, in the diocese of Cambray; Quedlinbourg, in Saxony, in the diocese of Halberstad, founded by blessed Matilda, queen of Germany, and king Henry the fowler, her husband, of which the abbess was the first princess of the empire; Selingstad, in the diocese of Mayence, founded by Eginhard; Steinfeldt, in the diocese of Cologne, to which retired the blessed Herman Joseph, at the age of twelve, and the three foundations of king Dagobert, Elvonensis, in which he was buried, Blandinum near Ghent, and St. Bavon, so called from Count Bavo, who there deposed his knightly arms, became a monk, and died in sanctity.

Of the monasteries in the British islands, two of the most illustrious were Bangor in Ireland, founded in the fifth century by St. Comgall, a disciple of Finstan, in the county of Down in Ulster, not far from the sea, where the passage to Scotland was short, and Bangor in Wales, in Flintshire, which Bede calls the most renowned cloister of the Britons, and which was organized and flourishing, when St. Augustine came from Rome. Here, as indeed in nearly all other countries, the foundation of monasteries was simultaneous with the first preaching of the gospel. The abbey of Glastonbury dates from about the year 300; that of Sherborn in Dorsetshire from 370. The first notice of Dryburgh is prior to the year 522, when St. Moden was its abbot, under whose invocation was one of its chapels. The great St. Colombkill alone founded above an hundred abbeys in Ireland, England, and Scotland, and other islands depending on them. Ireland was covered with these pacific retreats; which yet were continually multiplying, until the sinister epoch of Henry VIII., whose agents on their arrival found the monks rebuilding many abbeys with greater magnificence than before. In England, however, as we learn from Bede, there were not in the seventh century many monasteries, so that numbers of English nobles and others passed into France, which abounded with them, to retire into abbeys there. "At that time," he says, "the noble princess Eartongathe, daughter of Earcombert, king of Kent, passed the seas and came into France, for the purpose of learning to serve God in such a school of sanctity." Still, even in the seventh century we find several religious houses founded, as those of Chertsey in Surrey, in 666; Barking in Essex, in 680; Malmesbury in Wiltshire, in 670; Gloucester, in 680; St. Swithin in Winchester, in 634; St. Austin at Canterbury, in 605; Dorchester in Oxfordshire, in 635. The most celebrated, which date from the eighth century, were the abbey of Abingdon in Berkshire, founded in 720; those of Winchcomb and Tewkesbury in Gloucestershire, in 787 and 715; that of St. Alban in Hertfordshire, in 755; and that of Croyland in Lincolnshire, in 716. The abbeys of Thorney in Cambridgeshire, of Tavistock in Devonshire, and of St. Cuthbert in Durham, date from the ninth century. These were all of the Benedictine order: the abbey of Ramsay in Huntingdonshire, was not founded till the tenth century.

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* Trithem. in Chronic. Hirsangiensis.

The Cistercians, who possessed so many illustrious houses in England, were first called into it by a noble Englishman, Walter Espec, in 1125, under King Henry I.

to whom there exists a letter from St. Bernard. The first abbey was Furnes, in the diocese of York, and the second Rievaux*.

Such then were a few of the most eminent of these places esteemed divine, and consequently places of divine peace, because, as Hugo of St. Victor says, places cannot be divine, unless they be places of quiet and of peace†. Truly, well might that dove which in its flight marked the circuit of the projected monastery of Hautvilliers, be interpreted as signifying the tranquil reign of innocence which was there about to commence; and one might have accepted as a general denomination, for all similar retreats, the title given to the celebrated monastery of Gomon, on the coast of Bithynia, at the mouth of the Euxine, which was expressly called by the monks, in reference to the tranquillity enjoyed within it, Irene, or the place of peace. The mountain of Pozaytie in Poland, near the river Niem in Lithuania, accordingly changed its name for that of the Mount of Peace, when a Camaldolese monastery was built upon it, by Christopher de Pazzi, grand chancellor of the duke of Lithuania, of the noble Florentine race which had been banished in the preceding century‡. I might have noticed many other monasteries of equal celebrity, the histories of which, as Fauriel says of the abbeys of Conques, of Aniane, and of St. Guillem-du-desert, belong essentially to the general history of the country in which they were seated, and even to that of Europe§. The monastery of Oliva, for instance, is as closely connected with the history of Prussia, as Mount Casino is with that of Italy. The interest of many collections of French annals, grows pale before the historical grandeur of St. Medard at Soissons, founded by Clotaire I. where St. Boniface, the apostle of Germany, crowned Pepin, king of the Francs, which Charlemagne favoured, which was in turns the beloved retreat of Louis-le-debonnaire, and the scene of his misfortunes. But these names alone will suffice to bear out my assertion, that the monastic institute, containing, as we shall shortly prove, a whole race of men eminently peaceful, apart from all others that we noticed in the last book, was of such wide diffusion and of such importance in each locality, that half at least of a history of Catholic manners, in regard to the beatitude of the pacific, must be devoted to their consideration. In fact, it embraced millions of men dispersed over the earth, living united and pacifically, tranquil, laborious, obedient, and free.

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* Notitiæ Abb. Ord. Cister. viii.

† Annot. in Cœlest. Hier.

‡ Annal. Camaldul. lib. 77.

§ Hist. de la Gaul Mérid. iii. 844.

That the monastic profession was synonymous with a devoted love of peace and of its diffusion, might easily be inferred from what we met with in the last book. Though the complete appreciation of the fact will best be attained after concluding the present, it may be well to commence it by adducing to the point some express testimony. Now from the very nature of the institution. Its instructors argue that the object and result must have been pacific; for " from obedience, which was its key-stone," says St. John Climachus, " springs humility, and from humility a placid tranquillity of mind *." " All perturbations," as Cicero remarks, " arise from the will, and from an opinion †." The Stoics said that their fountain was intemperance, and a departure from right reason. Accordingly, in the part of the soul which was reasonable, the Pythagoreans placed tranquillity, placid quiet, and constancy of mind. The monastic rule requiring a life so eminently reasonable, averse to self-will, and the influence of private opinion, to impatience and intemperance in every form, could not therefore but conduce to that true and placid rest ascribed to those who embraced it in ages of faith, which as Paschasius Radbert says, " reason every where composes, and the serenity of religion commends ‡." Accordingly we find that peace is always represented as the chief characteristic of the monastic state. St. Basil, St. John Chrysostom, and St. Augustine, are never weary repeating that it is this, above all things, which recommends it to the human race. So it continued to be in every age. We find a letter from the celebrated abbot of Corby, Wibald, to the monks of Hastières,

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* Grad. iv.

† Tuscul. iv.

‡ Vit. Walæ.

with this superscription, "To the prior and the brethren of that place, Deo et paci militantibus *." When one of the courtiers of the emperor Frederic II. was moved to embrace the monastic habit, St. Francis gave him the title of Brother Pacific, to express that he had escaped from the world's turmoils and pageantries. Vincent of Beauvais, or his continuator, styling monks the true pacific, applies to them the epithets in holy writ, of "glorious men, rich in virtue, studious of beauty, living at peace in their domains, and obtaining glory in the generations of their nation †."

"Behold men without contestations," exclaims the church, in reference to those who chiefly came from amongst them, "true worshippers of God, keeping themselves pure from all evil work, and continuing in their innocence." "Many things might be said in his praise," says a monk of Villers, of Charles, the eighth abbot of that house, in the seventh century, "but there is one of which we should make especial mention—that never, from the day when he first entered the order, did the sun set upon his wrath; but, considering that he was bound by the monastic vow, he forgave, with the utmost benignity, all excesses committed against him, watching carefully over the purity of his conscience and the tranquillity of his heart ‡:" that is, he realized the monastic ideal: he was the type of the institution. In effect, as the rule of the seraphic Father expressly requires, "monks of every order were to be at peace with those who hated peace;" when they went through the world they were not to litigate, nor to contend with words, but to be mild and pacific §. "Now I counsel, admonish, and exhort my brethren in our Lord Jesus Christ, that when they go through the world, they should not quarrel nor contend with words, nor judge others, but that they should be meek, peaceable, modest, tractable, and humble, gently speaking to all as is right." They were to have a pacific heart towards those who disturbed their peace, towards those who hated peace. Of the pacific, who say with our modern writers of the Anglican school, that "in times of peace, with peaceful

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* Ap. Martene Vet. Script. et Mon. collect. ii. 450.

† Spec. Mor. i. part iv.

‡ Hist. Mon. Villar. ap. Martene Thes. Anec. iii.

§ Reg. S. Franc. c. 3.

men, no temper of mind should be more encouraged than that which seeks peace with all men," the monastic teachers have but a poor opinion. "Though they render good for good, and wish to injure no one," says St. Bernard, "they can rarely obtain salvation *." The standard proposed to monks is that of two other classes of the peaceful—of those who do not render evil for evil, but who endure wrongs with patience, and of those who render good for evil; the former, as he says, possessing their souls, and the latter, not only possessing their own, but winning others †. "No severe word was ever to escape their lips; for their heart was to be at rest from all enemies to its peace ‡." Monks were to be pacific within and without their walls, towards each other, and towards the rest of men. "Our fasts," says Hugo of St. Victor, in his commentary on the rule of St. Augustin, "do not please God as much as our concord." "There is nothing," he adds, "that Satan so much fears as the unity of charity: for if we distribute all that we possess for God's sake, this the devil does not fear, because he possesses nothing; if we fast, this he does not fear, because he has no need of food; if we watch, he is not alarmed, because he is sleepless; but if we are joined in charity, then he greatly fears, because then we hold fast on earth what he disdained to preserve in heaven."

Expressly for the sake of peace and charity, the monks of Fulda, we read, were divided into decads, over which a dean presided §.

Dom Martene remarks what severe penalties were decreed in the ancient monastic statutes, as in those of Froidmont, against all disseminators of discord, whose offence was a case reserved for the abbot ||. A monk of St. John-des-Vignes, at Soissons, having calumniated one of the brethren, was sentenced to keep silence for a month, and to carry the holy water, like a novice in the processions ¶.

In the year 1224, a discord arising in the convent of Monte Sereno, Tideric the superior, in common chapter, in holy week, prescribed, in virtue of obedience, that if any monk retained the least rancour against

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* De Conversione, c. 18. † Ib. 18.

‡ B. Esaiæ Abb. Orat. x. Bib. Pat. xii.

§ Schannat. Hist. Fuldens. 1. || Voyage Lit. 160.

¶ Hist. de Soissons, ii. 163.

another, he should abstain from communion of the altar [*]. The chronicle of the Carthusians relates that the holy prior, Henry of Louvain, would never take repose in the evening if a contention arose between any of the brethren, until he had restored peace and tranquillity [†].

Over the door of the Augustinian monastery in Freyburg, I read these words: "Ecce quam bonum et quam jucundum habitare fratres in unum!" Such was the ideal generally realized in the communities of the middle ages.

The pacific character of monks in the interior of their cloisters is displayed in a remarkable manner on all occasions of elections, which were so calculated to try its sincerity. The very need of an election arose in their judgment from the desire of peace. Witness these words of electors. "It is certain to all who know the foundations of Catholic purity that the solidity of the whole church consists in peace and the sign of being disciples of Christ, in love. For our Lord says, in the Gospel, 'My peace I leave you, my peace I give to you;' and again, 'By this shall all men know that you are my disciples, if you have love one to another:' therefore, no one is a disciple of Christ unless he is sealed with the seal of love and of peace; but this seal cannot be impressed on any unless on those in whom is unity of will; and that unity can only be found in those who submit to their superior. Therefore the Author of peace leaving no order in the church without a governing prelate, has clearly taught that in no other way can the fragility of human nature be reduced to unity of spirit or preserved in peace. Therefore, we poor brethren, in the monastery of Cella Bononi, after the death of Lord Garerius the abbot, have chosen a certain brother, by name Bernard, to preside ever us [‡]."

Stephen Pasquier is struck with the provisions for the liberty of elections in monasteries in ancient times: he cites from a charter of Charles the Bald, in the abbey of Turnuz, in the Maconnois, these words: "We concede to the same congregation license of always choosing for itself an abbot, according to the rule of St. Benedict," and this sentence, which an archbishop of Rheims, when he founded the abbey of St. Peter, obtained from Clovis the Second, "that the monks should have power of electing a superior according to their rule *."

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[*] Chronic. Montis Sereni ap. Menckenii Script. Rer. Ger. ii.

[†] Dorlandi Chronic. Cartus. lib. vii. c. 31.

[‡] Fulberti Carnot. Epist. cvii.

Let us hear Guibert de Nogent, speaking of the desire of his friends to promote his own election, for the sentiments he expresses were not extraordinary in those times: "It afflicted me to hear that my relations should be endeavouring to obtain for me what was granted to others, who had no carnal help, but merely the assistance of God; for these relations, in acting thus, were providing not so much for me as for themselves. I was delighted at being little: I had altogether a horror for a place of power and the shadow of a great name in the world; then first I learned what it was to have the intention of perpetual poverty. What shall I say, O Lord, how momentary was that paradise! how short that quiet, how brief the sense of that sweetness! Scarcely had a few months passed after my tasting the fruits of thy good spirit, when, lo! the news of my election to be abbot of St. Mary at Nogent-sous-Coucy, filled me with dismay, as I judged myself the worst and most sordid of men. Alas! the little progress I had made in letters, and my poor skill in teaching, had, it seems, rendered my electors blind. Good God! what would they have said if they could have seen my interior! Thou knowest, O God, who by an inscrutable judgment didst ordain that I, however impressed with a just sense of my unworthiness, should be set over men so much better than myself. Whether God was willing or unwilling in the affairs of my election I know not. This one thing securely I can declare, that I owed it not to the attempts made by any of my relations. I was known to none of the electors, nor did I know any of them. From not knowing me they respected me the more. On my arrival they concealed nothing from me, but with such a faithful confession disclosed all their interior that I, who thought I had seen monks elsewhere, certainly knew of none comparable to these. Thou knowest, O God, that I write not this book through arrogance, and that I would confess in it all my iniquities if I did not fear lest I should deprave the mind of many who would be filled with horror

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* Recherches de la France, liv. iii. 20.

at my actions. And although my works are corrupt and miserable, as far as regards myself, yet it is not hidden from thee how much my mind was bent upon promoting the salvation of those whom thou didst subject to me. On the day of my installation I preached on the words of the prophet, which were read on that Sunday next Christmas: 'Apprehendet vir fratrem suum domesticum patris sui: vestimentum tibi est, princeps esto noster, ruina autem hæc sub manu tua. Et respondebit ille: Non sum medicus, et in domo mea non est panis neque vestimentum: nolite constituere me principem. Ruit enim, Hierusalem, et Judas concidit.' From which words I explained the duties of the pastoral care—that a ruler must be a domestic well instructed in the church; the vestment is the habit of beautiful exterior works, on account of which he is made a prince, under whom the ruin of subjects cannot take place: but he replies, 'I am not whom you suppose, who can cure so many evils. You behold the external vestment which yet is not in the house, because the habit of the mind is not the same as that of the body. There is not either that daily bread which signified spiritual consolations, or that confirmation of charity in the interior man without which no one can rule others well: he refuses, therefore, to be a prince, for Jerusalem falls; that is, the experience of internal peace perishes, and Judas also falls: that is, the confession of sins fails through despair, after the loss of interior tranquillity, which is the last of all evils, and therefore a just cause for refusing to be a pastor *."

It would be endless to cite evidence that merit, without contradiction from party or local prejudices, was the only thing regarded in the peaceful elections of the cloister. When the fame of St. Aigulph's piety in the monastery of Fleury, on the Loire, had spread far and wide, the monks of Lerins sent a deputation to him to beg that he would undertake the government of their abbey. This one instance may represent them all.

With a view to peace, elections were made secretly, so that the names of those who elected were not known, which practice we find afterwards commanded by the holy council of Trent †. In the frequency of the unanimous elec-

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* Guiberti abb. de Novigent. de vita propria, lib. 1.

† xxv. 6.

tions of men of superior merit, is remarkably evinced the pacific character of such proceedings. Let us observe instances. In 1186, when the abbot William resigned the abbacy of St. Denis, the prior Huon was elected to succeed him without a dissentient voice or the least murmur *. On the abdication of Hartmot, Bernhard was elected abbot of St. Gall, and the historian of that monastery says, "All together, the old men and the youths, from the first to the last, the Lord granting a unanimous counsel, with one voice chose Bernhard for their abbot †." In 1326, John II., one of many in the same monastery, who possessed genius of the first order, was elected abbot of Einsiedlen without a dissentient voice. Again, in 1421, at the general chapter of the Franciscan order in Forli, where there were present about 3000 brethren, master Angelo of Sienna, a man excellent in science and in preaching, was unanimously elected general ‡. The religious orders well understood the obligation, of which pope Alexander III. reminded the Præmonstratensians, on occasion of an election, that the rule for all was, Nihil per contentionem aut inanem gloriam §. Not to observe the great calm produced on these occasions by the celebration of the divine mysteries, we may remark, that the elements of discord had been extirpated by deep humility and a just appreciation of the nature of pre-eminence. "Brother Bernard of Clairvaux, called abbot, which is but a little thing." Men that could speak thus of their own dignities were not likely to be angry competitors for them. The priors of Camaldoli always style themselves "the monk and sinner ||."

When it was known that the venerable Angelrann was to be elected abbot of the monastery of St. Richarius—king Robert himself pressing the election—the holy man judged himself unworthy, and preferred a post of humility to one of pre-eminence: so he left the monastery privately and concealed himself. The king, on arriving there, was told that the holy man had withdrawn secretly,

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* Chroniques de St. Denis ad an. 1186.

† Ratpert de Origine et div. Casibus Monast. S. Galli. apud Goldast. Rer. Al. 1.

‡ Annales Foro Livienses ap. Mur. Rer. Vet. Script. xxi.

§ Ap. Martene, Vet. Script. ii.

|| Ann. Camald. Præf. in v. tom.

and that no one knew where he was. The king admired the intention, but ordered that he should be sought for every where and brought back to him. The soldiers were sent on all sides in quest of him: at length, after a long search, he was found in the wood of Olnodiol in a deep solitude *.

Charles, the eighth abbot of Villiers, in the seventh century, brother of the count of Seyne, and at first a distinguished knight, fled from the abbatial dignity, but was at length compelled to accept it. He grieved that he should again find himself invested with liberties which he had wished to renounce with the world. After many labours he obtained leave from the head abbot of Clairvaux to resign his office, which had always kept him in great fear, considering the account that he would have to render of his administration. "This man," said the abbot, "is honoured by the greatest princes, beloved through all the country, most dear and necessary to his convent, and yet I cannot any longer detain him in his dignity; so, being absolved, he returned to the embraces of Rachel, wishing there to lie hidden in peace, and the remnant of his life to pass in the service of God, fulfilling the cloistral discipline †."

A pacific character was an essential qualification in those who were to be elected. Louis of Paris, commenting the rule of St. Francis, says, "The electors of guardians ought to choose good religious men, who love peace for themselves and for others, who know how to bear the bad humour of their subjects, and to compassionate their fragility. The electors of provincials ought to choose men who are slow to believe evil of others, and who will see with their own eyes before they condemn—men who are ready to hear both sides; who, through excess of zeal and goodness, will not believe those, who, under colour of piety and great excitement, come to tell them, as a secret, the faults of others; who love justice and mercy, but mercy still more than justice ‡."

The terms in which monastic superiors announce their own election are often very affecting. We may form an idea of their general style from reading the epistle of

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* Chronic. Centulensis, c. 2. ap. Dacher. Spicileg. iv.

† Hist. Mon. Villar. ap. Martene Thes. Anec. iii.

‡ Louis de Paris, Exposit. de la Règle des F. F. Mineurs, c. 8.

Pope Urban IV. to all religious communities, announcing his own election to the primal seat. That letter, one might believe, had been written by an Angel, not so much on account of the beauty of order that pervades it, and the perspicuity of its view, as to the origin of rule and the depth of thought which it discloses, and the unbending resolution it expresses to defend justice, as from the celestial air of peace which seems to emanate from each humble, loving word, and the kind of musical delight which is inspired by its calm, unpretending, and unearthly eloquence*. When Suger heard of his own election to be Abbot of St. Denis, the only impression he evinced was grief for the deceased abbot. He was on his road returning from Italy, in the month of February, when the news reached him. "One day," he says, "being risen very early to say Matins, before leaving the hostel where we lodged, I perceived, after finishing my prayers, that it was still too dark to set out; so I threw myself dressed as I was on my bed, to wait till day. I fell into a doze and had a dream, imagining myself to be in a skiff on the wide ocean, at the mercy of raging waves, and that I prayed God to deliver me and conduct me safely to port. I awoke, and finding it daylight, we set out; but on the road I could think of nothing but my dream, and I felt as if I was really threatened with some great danger, from which the goodness of God would deliver me; but I said not a word to my company. After some leagues we met a servant of the Abbey of St. Denis, who stopped on recognising me, and showed great anxiety but inability to speak. At length he informed me that, on the 19th of the month, the abbot, Adam, had died, and that two days after, the community being assembled, had elected me abbot by unanimous consent." Suger burst into tears through sorrow at the death of the holy man, who had received and nourished his youth, so that all who stood by were witnesses how he loved him.

The peacefulness of monastic superiors appears in their readiness to resign rather than disturb concord. Take an instance related by William of Jumiège. "A pilgrim on arriving at Cyprus, enters a certain church of St. Nicholas, where he prostrates himself in prayer before the altar, and in the midst of his prayer renders up his soul to God. The inhabitants of the island discover that this holy pilgrim was the venerable Thierri, Abbot of St. Evroul, who had abdicated his dignity in consequence of difficulties opposed to him, and who as a child of peace had resolved to go to Jerusalem. They buried him with honours in their Church *. The Abbot of St. Victor, at Marseilles, in 1217, made a visitation of the monastery of Vabres, and in the account which he wrote of his proceedings there, says, "Since we knew that a grievous and almost implacable discord had arisen between the abbot and the brethren, we took care to admonish the former, that for the sake of peace, he ought voluntarily to abdicate; and he, receiving our admonition humbly and devoutly, not caring for temporal honours, but with Paul desiring to be anathema for his brethren, willingly yielded up the place †." In the last book we had occasion to cite many instances which proved how truly pacific was the conduct of religious men, in their intercourse with the world.

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* Ap. Martene, Vet. Script. ii. p. 1252.

Monks in general were men such as a modern author speaks of, "who detested the strife of tongues, whom all noises discomposed." The Benedictine hymn for Vespers each Friday of the year was a supplication for the peace of the world.

"Da gaudiorum præmia,
Da gratiarum munera,
Dissolve litis vincula,
Adstringe pacis fœdera."

"Although to all the faithful of Christ," says Pope Alexander III., "we are bound to provide for the administration of justice, yet we are so much the more to attend to the cause of monks, as it is less proper for them to engage in any litigation ‡." Disputes respecting property, for example, were never suffered by any who had regard to their profession, to lead them aside from the paths of peace. Let us again hear the ancient writers, who describe them involved in such difficulties. "Lord Peter, Abbot of Clairvaux," says Cæsar of Heisterbach,

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* Lib. vii. c. 26.

† Ap. Martene, Vet. Script. Coll. i. p. 1130.

‡ Ap. Martene, Vet. Script. xi. 838.

"had but one eye: he was a holy man in deed as well as in name, an imitator of the Apostle. With him and his brethren a certain knight contended concerning some property: the day was fixed for their meeting, in order either to compose the difference or to go before the judge. The knight came with his friends, and the abbot with only one monk, on foot, like himself, simple and holy. The abbot being a lover of peace and poverty, and a despiser of transitory goods, spoke thus to the knight before all:—'You are a Christian man. If you say that these goods, about which there is this contention, are yours and ought to be yours, I am content with your testimony.' The knight caring more for the goods than for truth, answered, 'They are indeed mine.' 'Then let them be yours,' replied the abbot, 'I will not claim them more.' So he returned to Clairvaux. The knight went back to his wife as a conqueror, and told her all that had passed; but she being terrified at words so pure and simple, said, 'You have dealt treacherously with the holy abbot. Divine vengeance will punish us. Unless you restore these goods, you shall have no more of my company.' The knight was struck with remorse; so he went to Clairvaux, renounced the goods, and begged forgiveness. That blessed man in the time of our seniors, visited this cloister: he was of noble blood, being related to Philip, king of France, who was a great lover of holy simplicity *." "Constantine, a monk," says the same author, "related to me that when he was studying at Paris, John, Abbot of St. Victor, who was a German, had to appeal for judgment in an allodial cause between him and certain great nobles, who brought with them many experienced and skilful lawyers, who pleaded against the monks, while the abbot sat simply, without alleging a word in reply, so that he seemed more intent on prayer than on defending his cause; which the king observing said, 'Lord abbot, why do you say nothing?' To whom he answered meekly and with great simplicity, 'My lord, I know not what to say.' The king much edified then said to him, 'Return to your cloister, and I will speak for you. When the holy man had withdrawn, the king said to the knight, 'I command you, on pain of

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* Illust. Mirac. lib. vi. c. 2.

forfeiting my grace, to give no more trouble to the holy abbot:' and thus the complaints of the monks were finally successful *."

Many charts exist containing the cession of rights by abbots to prelates for the sake of peace. Thus in 1158 Ubert, Abbot of St. Michael, yields the church of St. Christopher de Colignola to Villano, Archbishop of Pisa, because it is written, "Servos Dei litigare non debere;" and that it is proper for the rectors of venerable places to provide rather the things which are of peace and utility, and that in this instance the controversies cannot be set at rest without great scandal and peril to souls, and therefore, with the council of his brethren, he makes over all his rights †.

In the annals of the abbey of St. Crépin at Soissons, is a singular narrative of a trial in the twelfth century, which after much pleading, was referred by the droit forain opposed to the canon law to the issue of a duel. The Abbot Teulf, who writes the account in a charter of the year 1135, says, "that in order to prevent it, he and the brethren decreed to settle it by compromise, in which the abbey waved its right during the life of the parties." The horror and disgust with which every instance of a contrary conduct in monks was regarded in the middle ages, might alone sufficiently prove what was the general practice. A satirist in the end of the twelfth century complaining of some law proceedings by the monks of Grandmont, produces them as a legitimate reason for refusing to join their community.

> "Ergo quid est, quod homo qui vivit ut Angelus intus,
> Pulsatur totiens exteriore foro?"

Of the Carthusians, on the contrary, he says—

> "Ad fora non veniunt quo litem scite resolvant,
> Nec populi vanum depopulantur Ave ‡."

Terrible is the letter of Peter of Blois, to the Abbot of Marmoutier, for having cited before the tribunals, the prior of St. Cosma, on the subject of certain lands and pastures, which he claimed for his monastery. "If you

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* Illust. Mirac. lib. vi. c. 2.

† Murat. Antiq. It. tom. iii. Excerpta Archiv. Pisani.

‡ Sententia Brunelli de Ordinibus Relig. ap. Martene, Vet. Script. vi.

would attend to the vow of your profession," he says to him, "you would study the things which are above, not those which are on the earth. The servant of God ought not to litigate, but should rather suffer himself to be defrauded. It was not becoming in a man of such an order, whose conversation was thought to be in heaven, to litigate for earth. Far be it from a spiritual man thus to affect earth. Of you it is written—O ye sons of men, why will you love vanity and seek a lie? For a lie, and transitory is the possession of this world. I saw you lately in the audience of the Archbishop of Tours litigating for these lands and pastures; and I grieve that I saw you so forgetful of all religion and decorum as to turn all to abuse, and to become a laughing-stock to all, instead of exhibiting in your countenance and manner the monastic gravity. You threw about your hands, you leaped forward, you distorted your whole face, insulting the poor prior with a proud demeanour, and shouting out with a nautic clamour. But He who dwelleth in heaven, and beholds the humble, will deliver the poor from the mighty. So in hatred of your dissolved and most troubled state, the prior was that day absolved. Nevertheless there remains for you a heavier judgment, and a day more to be suspected, which will put an end to your litigations, which to the scandal of the monastic profession, you now exercise in every court. For that readiness of a litigious and injurious tongue, the day of death which threatens your white head will demand vengeance. Your flesh is congealing; your limbs are stiffening; your lungs are labouring; your lips are slavering; your eyes are growing dim; your face is becoming pallid—so in a little spot of earth there will soon be dug a grave for the sinner; and a tomb shall be his house for ever, until shall come that terrible day which will render to every man according to his works. Cease then from things which wound consciences, scandalize the order, and destroy souls. They who litigate for lands or pastures, are unworthy to be placed in the land of the living, or in the place of pasture *."

To the eminently pacific character of those who followed the monastic profession in ages of faith, we might cite innumerable direct witnesses, and produce also ample

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* Pet. Bles. Epist. cxvii.

testimony from the tombs. This is, in fact, the characteristic on which all writers of cloistral biography seem to lay the greatest stress. So Theodoric, a monk of St. Ouen, dedicating a work in 1060 to Nicholas, abbot of that monastery, addresses him in these terms—

"Patri sincero, tranquilla pace sereno *."

What multitudes are commemorated in the Neustria Pia, and other similar works, as having been, like Reinaldus, Abbot of Preaux, "full of pacific goodness †." In the chronicle of the Carthusians, the author, speaking of the Priors Hugo, Bernard, Riferius, Gerard, William, Henry, John, Francis, Antony, and many others, sums up their praise by saying "in all whose breasts peace and goodness ever reigned ‡." In like manner, it is chiefly as the worshippers of peace that we find them commemorated on their sepulchres. Thus on the tomb of Nicholas III. abbot of St. Ouen, in the thirteenth century, we read—

"Abbas pacificus, humilis, pius, atque pudicus,
Justus, magnificus, fraternæ pacis amicus,
Prudens, facundus, patiens, pacisque secundus,
Non ea quæ mundus quærens, à crimine mundus §."

The epitaph of Roger, Abbot of St. Evroul, who died in 1126, ends with this line—

"Pacis amator erat, rogo nunc in pace quiescat ||."

That of John Inger, Prior of St. Barbara, in Normandy, bears this testimony—

"Æmulus hic pacis ¶."

On the tomb of Henry, Abbot of St. Laurence, at Liege, who died in 1258, and was buried in the middle of the choir, were these lines—

"Abbas Henricus nigrorum flos monachorum,
Largus, pacificus, præfulgens lampade morum,
Justitiæ cultor, veniæ pater et pietatis **."

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* Neustria Pia, xxii.

† Ibid. 511.

‡ Dorlandi Chronic. Cart. iv. 26.

§ Neustria Pia, xii.

|| Ibid. 123.

¶ Ibid. 730.

** Hist. Mon. St. Laur. Leodiens. ap. Martene, Vet. Script. iv.

On that of William III., Abbot of Bec, we read—

> "Mitis, munificus, patiens, et pacis amicus *."

And, on that of Fardulf, Abbot of St. Denis—

> "Tranquillus, placidus, promtus ad omne bonum †."

Thus the very sepulchres of monks were made to convey a lesson, enforcing the peculiar obligation of their state of life to be placid, tranquil, merciful, and pacific. But these preliminary observations, though necessary, seem to be leading us back to ground which detained us to weariness in the last book. Presuming, therefore, that the reader is already prepared to admit the justice of our view, in regarding monasteries as the abodes of men so eminently peaceful as to render a particular examination of their effects indispensable for the completion of our history, let us proceed at once to a new and magnificent subject, and endeavour to form an accurate estimate of these wonderful institutions, to the pacific excellence of which all that was holy and illustrious upon earth, in days of the highest intellectual glory, delighted to bear witness. Our object is not to give a scientific exposition of their history, which can be found in other sources; but to become practically familiar with the effects which resulted from them, that we may be able henceforth to feel ourselves as it were personally acquainted both with the places themselves, and with the men who inhabited them, with those who as Dante says—

> "Did bare the feet, and in pursuit of peace,
> So heavenly ran, yet deem'd their footing slow ‡."

CHAPTER II.

What was monastic life in general? and what did it imply? It was simply a Christian life, according to the precepts and counsels of Christ, accommodated to pecu-

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* Petri Divensis de Gestis Abbat. Beccens. ap. id. vi.
† Ap. id. vi.
‡ Par. xi.

liar circumstances and wants which are incident to some Christians in all ages of the world, and under every possible variety in the development of civilization. It implied also the fervour and devotion of the first ages, insomuch that even the most bitter antagonists admit, that "in the bosom of monasteries in the twelfth century might be found the austerity and sincere piety of the primitive church *." That community of goods, for instance, which originally characterized the whole Christian society, but which certainly was not intended to be perpetual in a literal sense universally, was observed in the monastic orders, without leading to any injurious results. In them it remained after zeal and charity had grown cold elsewhere, and also after it would have been impossible to have realized it in the ordinary society. Peter the Venerable Abbot of Cluny, accordingly exclaims—"What else is it to say, Omnia quæ habes da pauperibus, et veni sequere me," but "Become a monk †."

The monastic life, therefore, implied poverty, or the renouncement of personal possessions: and in explanation of their sentiments on this head, there were not wanting those who, to the uttermost, were vowed to be followers of their divine Master. Peter of Blois remarks, "that few rich men die who, at their departure from this life, do not wish to have been most poor ‡." There were in truth many considerations which recommended poverty to the monastic legislators. The love of poverty of the Franciscans seems to a French historian to "have been an effort to escape alive from the conditions of this life, from the servitude of matter, to conquer and anticipate here below the independence of a pure spirit §." "O how greatly is honest poverty to be desired," exclaims Alanus de Insulis. "To many, riches are an obstacle to acting well. Poverty is ever ready and secure. If you wish to serve God you must be either poor or like the poor. Si vis servire Deo, aut pauper sis oportet, aut pauperi similis ||." Even in the ancient world, as Cardan remarks, "all professed lovers of wisdom

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* Capefigue, Hist. de Phil. Auguste, i. 39.

† Pet. Ven. Epist. i. 28.

‡ Pet. Bles. Epist. lx.

§ Michelet, Hist. de France, iii.

|| Alan. In. de Arte Prædicatoria, c. 4.

were poor; Plato and Aristotle having become rich only in their latter years *."

But to return. Writers of the middle ages show, "that the monastic was truly an apostolic life †." And, in fact, within the monasteries with which Europe was then covered, the manners of the primitive church were perpetuated under the peculiar circumstances above spoken of, which we shall presently explain. Hence Richard, archbishop of Canterbury, in the reign of Henry II., writing to the Cistercians says: "It is the voice of all men that the professors of the Cistercian order keep the footsteps of apostolic religion in moderation of food and raiment, in watching, in confessions, in discipline, in psalmody, in humility, in hospitality, obedience, and in all other fruits of love ‡." As for the external distinctions of monks, their habits, hours, and modes of life, Fleury shows that these were not the inventions of caprice, but merely the remains of ancient manners, preserved through ages, while the rest of the world had undergone a prodigious change. The habit was holy from the prayers of the church and the sanctity of those who wore it. A conversion of the heart to God was, therefore, the primary and the peculiar want of some christians, the secondary cause of all religious orders existing. "That of the Carthusians," says De Tracy, "owes its origin to a holy conversation between St. Bruno and two of his friends; the mouth of the just was thus seen, as the Scripture declares, to be a source of life §." Monastic life may be also represented as a restoration of the primal state of man, with the substitutions rendered necessary by the fall. So in the chronicle of Fontanelle the Benedictine rule is thus qualified, "status vitæ innocentis secundum eximii P. Benedicti normam ||." "A convent of religious," says Hugo of St. Victor, "a congregation of monks, is a paradise, having the tree of life in the midst of it, yielding shade and fruit, that is, Christ giving life ¶." But it is that state still inse-

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* Cardan. de Consolatione, lib. iii.

† Ruperti Abbot. Tuitiensis de Vita vere Apostolica, ap. Martene, Vet. Script. tom. ix.

‡ Pet. Bles. Epist. lxxxii.

§ Vie de St. Bruno.

|| In Mab. Præf. in 2 Sæcul. Ben. § 1.

¶ Ex Miscellan. lib. iii. tit. 60.

cure and requiring defence. Therefore St. Bernard says, "our order is humility, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost: our order is silence, fasting, prayer, labour, and above all, to hold the more excellent way which is charity *." St. Anselm defines it in still fewer words, saying, "the object of the monastic discipline is purity of heart, and the end everlasting life †." "But were not all christians, whatever be their state, called to perfection?" as Rosmene says in the beginning of his maxims, "and might not the cloisters have sheltered men of very different intentions?" Assuredly would have been the answer of the middle ages. Therefore, as Antonio de Guevara says, "a perfect man makes the world a monastery, and the profane man makes a monastery the world ‡." Still there were reasons why there should be monasteries, as we shall see in the issue.

The church had, from the first, some persons who aspired to follow the evangelic counsels, and who were styled Ascetics, from the Greek word which signifies men that exercise themselves. Though they lived in the midst of men, and were distinguished only by their more austere and regular life, they were, in fact, the same as monks §. The monastic institute, in its regular form, is traced to the persecution under Decius, when multitudes fled to the mountains and woods, and were so enamoured with their peace that they refused to leave them when the persecution had ceased ||. The monastic life began to be called a religious life from the word *relegendo*, either because monks continually read again the things relative to God; or, as St. Augustin and St. Thomas observe, "because they were bound together by peculiar ties of charity." For at least two centuries the monks were not ecclesiastics but purely laymen. St. Pachomius sent none of his monks to receive holy orders; and his monasteries were served by priests from without. As Peter of Blois observes, "Paul, Antony, Apollonius, Mutius, Hilarion, Paphnutius, both the Macharius', and Arsenius, Benedict, and other men of blessed memory,

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* Epist. cxlii.

† Tractat. ascetic. S. Anselmi, ap. Dacher. Spicileg. iii.

‡ Epist. ii.

§ Bened. XIV. De Canonizat. Servorum Dei, 152.

|| Joan. Devoti Institut. Canonic. lib. i. tit. ix.

were never made priests [*]." It is no disparagement to the monastic institution that the justice of many of the views on which it was founded had been recognised and enforced by sages of the ancient world; the fact is certain. Pythagoras and his disciples at Crotona led a life in community, and were styled in consequence Cœnobites [†]. The Pythagorean life required community of goods, a noviciate, piety, erudition, silence, abstinence from flesh, and continence [‡]. Of course the gulph which separates all heathen from christian philosophy is ever the same; but still the former very often laid down principles which wanted only the foundation of the latter to be identical with the monastic views. Such are many of the precepts of Epictetus [§], and the distinctions of Cebes, where he shows how many philosophers, and poets, and orators, mistake the false for the true discipline, and that the two guides which enable men to attain to the rock of true discipline are continence and endurance, two sisters, who stand on the summit and encourage those who attempt to mount, saying, "Endure but a little more and you will find the ascent easy and safe." His description of the entrance to this way might remind one of our old monastic buildings. "Do you see that little door, and the path to it bearing no marks of having been trodden by many. That is the gate." Plato, with this reservation, is also thoroughly monastic. As when he says, "that there remains but a small number of men consorting with philosophy in a worthy manner: such as either magnanimous by nature look down upon the dignities and affairs of the state as beneath them; or else as abandon some other art which they had learned, but which they now despise in comparison with the love of wisdom, and who therefore come to it [||]." He shows that men who are accustomed to the shades of the earth are incapable of sustaining celestial light, and, on the contrary, that those whose conversation is in heaven by their holy life find the knowledge of the malice of this world insupportable. Most remarkable indeed is the similarity between the spirit of the monastic institute and that ideal and definition of good which was announced by Cleanthes in the lines recorded by St. Clement of Alexandria :—

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[*] Epist. cxxiii.

[†] Jamb. de Pyth. vit. 5.

[‡] Ib. 6.

[§] Manual. 20. 30.

[||] De Repub. vi.

Τἀγαθὸν ἐρωτᾷς μ' οἶόν ἐστ'· ἄκουε δή.
τεταγμένον, δίκαιον, ὅσιὸν, εὐσεβὲς,
κρατοῦν ἑαυτοῦ, χρήσιμον, καλὸν, δέον,
αὐστηρὸν, αὐθέκαστον, αἰεὶ συμφέρον,
ἄφοβον, ἄλυπον, λυσιτελὲς, ἀνώδυνον,
ὠφέλιμον, εὐάρεστον, ἀσφαλὲς, φίλον,
ἔντιμον, ὁμολογούμενον—
εὐκλεὲς, ἄτυφον, ἐπιμελὲς, πρᾷον, σφοδρὸν,
χρονιζόμενον, ἄμεμπτον, αἰεὶ διαμένον.
ἀνελεύθερος πᾶς ὅστις εἰς δόξαν βλέπει,
ὡς δὴ παρ' ἐκείνης τευξόμενος καλοῦ τινός *.

Abandoning, however, these observations, let us enquire from christian monuments respecting the views and motives of those who founded or embraced the monastic order, who themselves challenged enquiry into its origin. "For as no one," says Salvian, "does any thing unless for the sake of safety or advantage, so we undertake this mode of life because we think it convenient, reflecting on the shortness of present and the duration of future things, considering how little are the first, how great the latter, that the judgment will be tremendous, and the life with God and His saints most blissful †." "We consider," says another, "the narrowness of the gate, the numbers who perish, the dangers of the world, of its idle conversation, of its many trials, and the comparative security of renouncing all things for Christ. We reflect on the importance of associating with the holy, as David said, 'Cum sancto sanctus eris, et cum viro innocente innocens eris : cum electo electus eris, cum perverso perverteris.' 'They remarked,' as Cardinal Bona says, 'that the abundance of cares and solicitudes which must belong to all who mix much with the world is an obstacle to that devout contemplation in which they wished to pass their lives ‡ ;'" a remark not unnoticed even by the ancient poet, saying,

Αἱ δὲ φρενῶν ταραχαὶ
Παρέπλαγξαν καὶ σοφόν §.

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* Protrepticus, c. vi.
† Salviani Timoth. lib. 2.
‡ De Divin. Psal. 502.
§ Pind. Olymp. vii.

The Venerable Bede observes, "that a further obstacle was furnished by much conversation with people in society*." "Experience proves," says another, "that the soul, dissipated by the curiosity of secular things, can with difficulty recollect itself and return to the meditation of heavenly things†." The reply made to Charles VII. of France might, with the change of a word, express that of monks when their opinion was asked respecting the life under a standard formally opposed to theirs: "One can't lose one's crown with more gaiety." St. Bonaventura says, "that he who is loaded with temporal things cannot readily follow Christ ‡." Now the following Him, whose love is the source of all beatitude, was the most important of all occupations in their judgment. Their strongest conviction is thus expressed by Dante:

"He hath in sooth good cause for endless grief
Who, for the love of thing that lasteth not,
Despoils himself for ever of that love §."

They renounced therefore the former love, and in the cloister sought peace from all concupiscence; for to their state almost alone we may truly apply the poet's word,

"Hæc est
Vita solutorum misera ambitione gravique ||."

Hence all those injunctions, as in the commencement of the rule of Fontevrauld: "A sæculi actibus se facere alienum, nihil amori Christi præponere ¶." Hence those congratulations of St. Bernard, "You have done well, alienating yourself more and more from the acts of this world, which is pure and spotless religion **." "The first especial cause of all monastic life," says a writer of the fifth century, "is the desire to avoid the occasions of sin, to declare war with the perverse world, and to be delivered from the danger of its snares ††." In effect, by their triple vow, the monks extracted from themselves the roots of all disorders that fill the world with discord, the concupiscence of the flesh, the concupiscence of the eyes, and the pride of life. To extirpate these was to uproot the germs of war and misery from the human heart.

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* De Templo Salom. † Joan. à Jesu instruct. Magist. Novitiorum. ‡ St. Bon. Meditat. Vitæ Christi, xxi.

§ xv. || Hor. Sat. i. 6.

¶ La Reigle de l'ordre de Fontevrauld, chap. i.

** Epist. ccclxxxv. †† Consultatio Zachæi et Apollonii, lib. iii. 3, 4. ap. Dacher. Spicileg. x.

Let us hear the reflections of Mœhler on the ascetical life suggested by the work of St. Athanasius on the life of St. Anthony: "Continence, and an indifference for the goods and pleasures of the earth, sublime gifts of some souls, and in their will, the power, or at least an ardent desire, to break the bonds which attach us to a world that passes, have been the first elements of the monastic life. By means of divine grace the spiritual man predominates to such a degree in these privileged souls, and they are drawn with such force towards things unchangeable and holy, that the bonds which attach them to the things of this world are hardly felt; in them the spiritual almost entirely eclipses the animal life. Their life is hidden with Jesus Christ in God. The expression is not exact when we say that men have formed the resolution to disengage themselves by degrees from the bonds which attach them to things temporal, in order that they may more freely occupy themselves with things eternal. If they do not marry; if they only take the nourishment which is absolutely necessary; if they hold themselves at a distance from the pleasures and vanities of the world; it is not because they have recognised beforehand that these are good means to raise themselves to perfection. Their manner of life is less the cause than the consequence of the perfection which shines in them. They do not banish terrestial thoughts from their souls in order to find room for celestial thoughts; but all place being already occupied by these, it is impossible for the former to find access. Here then we learn to explain the origin of the first monks called the Ascetics. ' They did not invent the spiritual life to form an opposition to the wholly sensual life of the majority. The Ascetics were distinguished by a profound knowledge of sacred truths, and by a great piety, often also (in consequence of the purity and strength of their mind, and of their elevation above the external influences which trouble and obscure the intellectual eye) by a just appreciation of things and by a consummate prudence; in fine, sometimes by miraculous gifts, by the power of healing maladies in a supernatural manner, of dispelling demons, and of predicting the future. Now man is naturally inclined to venerate what is pure, great, and holy. These monks were then regarded as the friends of God, and the crowd pressed from all sides to approach them, and often came from distant countries. This is the state of things described by St. Athanasius in his life of St. Anthony. The inhabitants of heaven seemed to be descended into the cells of the mountains; they chanted, they cultivated sciences, they taught, they prayed, they rejoiced in the glory to come, they worked to do good, and they adorned their lives by friendship and concord. It was, as it were, a country separated from the rest of the world, a kingdom of piety and justice; to injure any one, or to suffer injury from any one, were two things equally unknown. A multitude of monks peopled the heights, but all were only of one soul, and desired only one thing—their sanctification and their salvation. Whoever visited these cells of the Ascetics and contemplated their lives ought to have cried, 'How lovely are thy pavilions, O Jacob! and thy tents, O Israel! They are like the valleys which are spread to a distance, like the gardens on the banks of rivers, like the tabernacles raised by Jehovah *.'"

"To be a philosopher," says Cowley, "is but to retire from the world, or rather to retire from the world as it is man's, into the world as it is God's †." The monastic writers say no more than this. "Populus solus habitabit et inter gentes non reputabitur." "A great praise, brethren," adds Hugo of St. Victor, after citing these words, "when the people dwell alone, and are not reputed among the nations, all of whom follow the desires of the flesh and the glory of the world ‡." "There is the world, of which God is the Creator," says Richard of St. Victor; "mundus per ipsum factus est: and there is the world, of which God is the Saviour; sic Deus dilexit mundum, ut Filium suum unigenitum daret: and there is the world, of which the devil is the prince, of which we read, nolite diligere mundum §." It was of this last alone that the monastic life implied the renouncement. "To fly from Babylon, in its language, as in that of the prophets, meant to fly from the city of this world, from the society of wicked men and angels ||." This is what St.

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* Num. xxiv. 5, 6. † Essays. ‡ Serm. lxxvi.

§ Ric. S. Vict. super Apocalypsum, lib. iii. 8.

|| S. August. Civ. Dei, xviii. 18.

Bernard had in view when he cried, "Fly from the midst of Babylon; fly, and save your souls." All the rest was only for greater security; "for there are risks," as he proceeds to say, "for innocence in delights, for humility in riches, for piety in business, for truth in loquacity, for charity in this perverse world *." True the monastic life implied retreat, even from the world in which continued many of the elect; but for many souls this was necessary; and there are not wanting modern philosophers who have acknowledged that it was. "Though a wise man," says Cowley, "could pass never so securely through the great roads of human life, yet he will meet perpetually with so many objects and occasions of grief, shame, anger, hatred, indignation, and all passions, that he had better strike into some private path, nay, go so far, if he could, out of the common way, 'ut nec facta audiat Pelopidarum †.'" In the monasteries, more than in the farms of Virgil, men were delivered from beholding the affairs of empire, and the fall of kingdoms; there they might live in peace, neither lamenting their wants, nor envying those who had possessions; seeing neither the iron laws, nor the insane forum, nor the decrees of senates ‡.

Why are devout Christians to be despised for expressing desires which are admired on the lips of Cowley and Virgil? The Catholic philosophy admitted of no such inconsistency. Cowper indeed, even in praising retirement, adds,

> "Not that I mean to approve, or would enforce
> A superstitious and monastic course."

To enforce it no Catholic pretended; but in what the distinction consists which renders the monastic retirement an exception, I believe it would have puzzled him to tell. "Beatæ aures quæ venas divini susurri suscipiunt, et de mundi hujus susurrationibus nihil advertunt §." Such was the monastic principle. "Averte oculos meos ne videant vanitatem. Emitte lucem tuam et veritatem tuam." Such was the monastic prayer, and "never will I cease praying thus," adds Richard of St. Victor, "till vanity hath passed and light hath shone ||." In fine, the

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* De Conversione, c. xxi.

† Essays.

‡ Georg. lib. ii. 500.

§ De Im. iii. 1.

|| Ric. S. Vict. Annot. in Ps. xxv.

monastic life was a reducing to practice the mystery of holy Saturday; it was the life hidden in Jesus Christ; a perpetuation of the festival instituted by St. Paul in the Epistle read on that great day. " Mortui enim estis, et vita vestra abscondita est cum Christo in Deo." The monastic silence, that profound, tranquil acquiescence in a life of abnegation and of insensibility to human praise or blame, saving charity, was a life so contrary to that of the world, that it might truly be compared to the quiet and repose of the grave. But it was a true life: " Cellæ et cœli habitatio cognatæ sunt," says St. Bernard, "quod geritur in cœlis, hoc est in cellis. Quidnam est hoc? Vacare Deo, frui Deo."

The monastic life, we might have added, implied celibacy; which, as a French Dominican observes, was not the invention of monks; it existed before there were monks, and they only raised it to the dignity of a virtue: but having in a former book explained the sentiments of men in ages of faith, with respect to that discipline in regard to the clergy at large, there was no necessity for our dwelling upon it here. John Gerson, in his discourse upon that state, refutes in advance all the objections that have been urged in latter times; and to that unanswerable treatise those who demand further argument may be referred *. St. Chrysostom, it is true, had already done the same, when he examined with eyes fixed upon the eternal world the happiest and most successful life of those who were not called to observe it †; but further citations are needless in this place. " Not vain or void of truth," says St. Bernard, " is that form of life ‡." Within the cloister it implied days passed in the contemplation of the highest truth, and of ideal grandeur, a converse with the glories and solemnities of universal nature, thoughts of sages and heroes, unmixed with minor things, the fiery consciousness of activity, for, as we shall see, labour was of obligation, and at the same time, what could hardly perhaps elsewhere be united with it, cloudless serenity of mind, uninterrupted peace.

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* Gersoni Opera, tom. iii.

† St. Chrysost. Tract. de Virginitate, cap. xxvi.

‡ De Conversione, xxi.

CHAPTER III.

After solution of this first inquiry, we shall be asked by those who lack experience to direct them, in their old errors blind, to what purpose of utility served the monastic orders? For many that are now afflicted with distorted vision, are persuaded that they were vain, if not pernicious institutions; following the sophists, who, lamenting that the times of heathen philosophy are past, say, in allusion to the Academy, that "the walks which a divine genius had immortalized, were abandoned to the most deceitful as well as to the most useless of men." And indeed rightly do they say that the monks were useless, if we understand and use the distinction pointed out by the sage whose genius they extol, who said that the true philosophers are useless in the state, adding, "but it is not through their fault that they are useless, since it is through that of the evil men, who do not make use of them*." Although it will be necessary to have arrived at the end of the present book, to understand completely the use of monasteries, we ought not to proceed without endeavouring to give some reply to a question that is sure to be urged from the commencement; for which purpose let us endeavour to discover what answer would have been immediately given in ages of faith, had such an inquiry been made. It is recorded in monastic history, that St. Bernard coming to make the foundation of the Abbey of Villers, in Brabant, and looking down from the mountain upon the gorge in which it was to stand, said, "In this place will many souls be saved." Such was the utility which he expected from it. Now this was the chief and primary use of monasteries, according to the judgment of men in ages of faith. In them many souls were saved; placed and retained in harmony with God and man, in that divine peace from which in the last book we traced all earthly peace. This is beautifully expressed in these words of St. Bernard, which we find usually inscribed on some conspicuous part of the Cistercian abbeys, "Bonum est nos hic esse, quia homo vivit purius, cadit rarius, surgit velocius, incedit cautius, quiescit securius, moritur felicius, purgatur citius, præmiatur copiosius." The blessed Otho, Bishop of Bamberg, confessor and apostle of Pomerania, being asked familiarly by some in 1150, why he founded and built so many monasteries, replied, citing the evangelical parable of the Good Samaritan, who conveyed the wounded man to an inn, adding "The world is all a place of exile, and as long as we live in this world, we are at a distance from our Lord. Therefore, we need inns and stables. Now monasteries and cells are inns and stables. These are then of great utility to us poor wanderers; and if we fall among robbers and are stript and wounded, and left half-dead, certainly we shall find by experience how much better it is to be near an inn, than at a distance from one; for when sudden destruction comes upon us, how can we be carried to a stable if it be far off? So it is much better that there should be many such places than few, seeing how great is the danger and how large the number of persons exposed to it; and now especially that men are so multiplied on the earth, it is not absurd that monasteries should be multiplied; since the abundant population admits of numbers embracing a chaste life. Finally, it is well to have these built, that in all things God might be honoured and man assisted; and how great is the honour to God and the utility to man, which daily result from monasteries? The spiritual is even greater than the temporal utility; for there the blind see, the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, the dead are raised, and the poor have the Gospel preached to them *."

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* Plato, De Repub. lib. vi.

Not, however, to press men with avowals which would in an instant render evident the inutility of our attending further to their objections, let us descend from this elevation, and endeavour to show by obvious reasons, drawn from principles which all will admit, why such important results followed from the institution of the monastic orders.

In the first place, then, the advantages of a life in community, as set forth by St. Basil, in his great Rules, are great and incontestable. That life, one of "the rights of man," as well as a want incident to humanity, corre-

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* De S. Ottone, Pommeran. Apostol. lib. i. ap. Canis. Lect. Antiq. iii.

sponds with an intimate sentiment of our nature, which shrinks from the sad issue described by a great modern writer, where he says, that to advance towards the grave, growing each day more and more isolated, is the lot of man. As doubtless it is in the present age, when the passion of individuality devours the human heart. How different is it from that life in a monastery, so beautifully described by St. Basil! The Stagyrite remarked the want which human nature felt for such association. "Men," he says, "love to do things in company with others. They love to take exercise together, and to philosophize together; and it is with friends that they wish to pass their days *."

"Those men," says Plato, "who are of the best natures, devote themselves to continence and friendship, conversing with men only, and living without marriage, but being susceptible of the most firm and indissoluble affection for such as are of a like nature, from whom they wish never to be separated through life, though they are never able to say what they wish to happen to each other, while it is evident that their souls are filled with some desire which they are not able to express, and that they divine what is desirable. And if Vulcan should come to them with his instruments, and say, 'O men, what is it that you wish should happen to each of you?' and if they still doubting, he should again ask, "Is this what you desire, that you should be united for ever, and never be separated from each other? for if this be your desire, I am willing to unite you, not only as long as you live, but in such a manner that you shall not be separated even after death,' hearing this, it is certain that they would seem to wish for nothing else, and they would feel that this was what they had long desired, the cause being in that ancient primal nature of man before he was isolated, to which this highest love restores them, yielding them many benefits for the present, and the greatest hopes for the future, inspiring them with piety, and making them happy and blessed †." Now if the natural reason of men could thus appreciate the advantages of a common life, how much more will not the Christian wisdom esteem it! for as an English author says, "it may be truly affirmed, that there was never

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* Ethic. ix. 12.

† Conviv. c. 16.

any philosophy, religion, or other discipline, which did so plainly and highly exalt the good which is communicative, and depress the good which is private and particular, as the holy faith." Hence we find that associations of pious men, who gave themselves to retreat and prayer, arose in the first days of the church, and were spread wherever the Gospel was announced; in allusion to which St. Chrysostom says, that whoever has renounced earthly affections or possessions for the discipline of Christ, in order to advance more in his love, on that account will find more who will receive him with internal affection, and rejoice to support him with their substance. The Angel of the school pronounces this sentence, "Man to act well wants the assistance of friends, in regard to works both of the active and of the contemplative life [*]." "In a community," says Thomas à Kempis, "a man lives more securely; and if sometimes he is troubled by one, on the other hand he is consoled by another. There he is excited to good by example, and warned from evil. There he finds persons he can love; the censure on another is an admonition to himself: there each one guards the other. There are diverse offices and one spirit of charity. There the sound visiting the sick rejoices to serve Christ in so doing; there one being weary of attendance, another supplies his place. There while one reads, many are edified; there each one having his weekly course, they all are mutually relieved. There a man has many to pray for him, and at his last moments to protect him against the devil; there he has as many helpmates as he has companions. There he happily sleeps in the Lord, and has many intercessors to deliver him the sooner from purgatory: there after death he leaves heirs who will be mindful of him: there his labour and good conversation will not be forgotten, but will profit many in future times for an example. There he participates in the merits of all: there he lives for a time with those with whom he will hereafter rejoice for everlasting ages [†]." Clemens Alexandrinus thus describes it, "Here all are soldiers and guards; no one is idle, no one useless. One is able to pray for you to God, another to console you when sick, another to weep and sympathise with you, another to teach you what is useful to salvation, another to correct you with boldness, another to consult together with you like a friend; and all, to love you truly, without guile, without hypocrisy, without flattery. O sweet attendance of friends, O blessed ministry of comforters, O the faithful services of those who fear only God, O the true simplicity which is incapable of a falsehood, O the honourable labour which is in obedience to God, to please God!"

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[*] Quæst. iv. art. 8.

[†] Id. Serm. i. p. 2.

The conviction of men in ages of faith, that the interests of the soul required them to associate with devout persons, rested upon solid principles, some of which were not unknown to the ancient world. Socrates relates in the Platonic dialogue, that many of his disciples who made great progress in wisdom while with him, had not continued to retain it when they left him. This was the case with Aristides, son of Lymmachus, who confesses it in these remarkable words, "I say the truth, though it may seem incredible, but what I learned from you was never in the way of instruction, but merely by being with you. I seemed to advance from being in the same house with you, though I were not to be in the same room, but still more when I was also in the same room with you, so as to be able to see you while speaking; and above all, when I sat by your side and held you; but now, since my absence on the naval expedition, all this faculty has left me and passed away *." Here is a beautiful illustration of the necessity to which so many of the ancient sages and poets bear witness, as when Pindar exclaims, "But may it happen to me discoursing to be conversant with the good †;" and Maximus of Tyre, "nothing is more hostile to the virtue of a man, than the being surrounded with wickedness;" and Æschylus, "I mourn the destiny that blends the just with the unhallowed. Nothing worse in whatever cause than impious fellowship: nothing of good is reaped. If midst a race, inhospitably bent on savage deeds, regardless of heaven, the just man fix his seat, the impending wrath spares not, but strikes him with vindictive fury, crushed in the general ruin ‡." Hence the

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* Plato, Theages.

† Pyth. Id. 11.

‡ Sept. cont. Theb.

wise old man in Plautus addresses these words to his son:

> " —— Nolo ego cum improbis te viris,
> Gnate mi, neque in via, neque in foro ullum sermonem exsequi.
> Novi ego hoc seculum, moribus quibus sit. Malus bonum malum
> Esse volt, ut sit sui similis *:"

But let us hear the old Christians speak. "Saul, being among the prophets," says Father Diego de Stella, "became a prophet and did prophesy, and among fools he became a fool. St. Peter, being amon the apostles, confessed Christ to be the Son of God, but afterwards in Caiaphas's house, where he was with the wicked, he did deny him. It seemeth hereby that a great alteration was made in the man by reason of the company that he was with. If thou puttest dead among quick burning coals, they will soon be set on fire. Draw thou near unto the burning coals which be the virtues of good men, for though thou be never so much wasted and consumed by thine own evil life, yet good men with their virtues will revive and quicken thee again. St. Thomas, because he did separate himself from the rest of his followers, did not see Christ when he rose again; and when he joined himself in company with them again, our Redeemer appeared unto him, and so, of an unbelieving disciple, was made a faithful and true disciple. It is a dangerous thing to forsake the company of them that fear God. The Holy Ghost descended upon Whitsunday when the disciples were gathered together, and if thou wilt continue among good men, thou shalt receive the Holy Ghost as they did †."

"He who adheres to a holy man," says St. Gregory the Great, "from the custom of seeing him, and of speaking with him, and from the example of his works, will be kindled with a love of truth." "Since you know that many are called, but few chosen," says Pope Adrian, writing to St. Hildegard, "join yourself to the number of the few, and persevere to the end in holy conversation,

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* Trinum. ii. 2.

† On the Contempt of the World. St. Omer, 1622.

that with your sisters you may come to those joys which 'eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart of man conceived.'" "As in the world," says Dionysius the Carthusian, "one draws another to sin, so in a religious community one attracts another to virtue. 'A brother who is assisted by a brother,' says Solomon, 'is like a fortified city.' Consider deeply the quality and quantity of the perils in the world, and act for your soul as you would in case of a temporal danger; for what you have to fear is the loss of the highest and incommutable good—the eternal God—irrecoverable and everlasting felicity." Now this was one of the advantages furnished by monastic life. "Holy men," we read, "attend not to good places, but to good conversation in places." "The place of the just," says St. Gregory, "is a good conversation: the place of the just is the Lord." Hence in the formula of the promise made by strangers on applying for reception into a monastery, extracted by Mabillon from a very ancient commentary on the rule of St. Benedict, by Hildemar, we find these words—"Coming from distant provinces to this monastery, because the conversation of the brethren of this place pleases me; and because my conversation pleases them: therefore I promise stability in this monastery, and by this writing with my own hand pledge myself that it shall be perpetual *."

If we refer to facts, there will be no difficulty to find the verification of these views. "In all ages," says a modern historian, who is not Catholic, "the clergy who lead a life separate in the world have been effected by the influence of the passing current; while the regular or monastic clergy, though hearing the storm of human passions roar at a distance, escaped its fury, and pursued, without any important revolution, the even tenor of its way." And in another history we are told that the experience of all ages has shown the evils and dangers to which isolated priests are exposed. Without doubt such is the purport of historical testimony. The Saxon chronicle, in reference to England in the year 1087, says, "So it was in those days that little righteousness was in this land with any men but with the monks alone, wherever they fared well †" Stephen Pasquier observes, "that the monastic institute was the principal instrument

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* Præfat. in IV. Sæc. § 4.

† P. 292.

by which the church in France was reformed after the great disasters under the race of Charlemagne *." In effect every where else it was the same. Michelet goes so far as to say, "that at one epoch the spiritual genius of the Church took refuge in the monks, and that the monastic state was an asylum for the Church, as the Church had been for human society †."

Peter of Blois, archdeacon of London, and a secular, supplicating the sovereign pontiff to convert a certain parish church into a Cistercian convent, on account of the incorrigible manners of the secular clergy of the place, uses this strong language: "Convert this stye of swine into a temple of God; and let this den of shameless sinners become a dwelling for those who seek the face of the God of Jacob, and who will make it a paradise of pleasure, and a sanctuary of the Holy Ghost ‡."

The monastery of Lerins alone gave to the Church twelve archbishops, twelve bishops, and more than one hundred martyrs. Three of the greatest popes, St. Gregory VII., Urban II., and Pascal II., came from Cluny. The Church of God venerates no less than twenty-two saints who were monks of the monastery of St. Bertin, at St. Omer §. The archbishops of Mayence used almost always to be drawn from the abbey of Fulda ||. On entering the court of the monastery of St. Gregory, on the Celian hill at Rome, you read inscribed the names of the great and holy bishops who issued from that house; amongst which are those of St. Augustin, St. Laurentius, St. Petrus, St. Honorius, all archbishops of Canterbury, St. Mellitus, bishop of London, St. Justus, bishop of Rochester, and St. Paulinus, archbishop of York. In the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries, it was almost exclusively the monasteries which supplied men worthy of the episcopacy. These pontiffs retained the habit, and persevered in the regular life, as we read of St. Cæsarius of Arles, St. Germain of Paris, St. Ælbert of York, and others. So renowned was the abbey of St. Victor at Paris for its discipline and science, that many French bishops sought to procure regular

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* Recherches de la France, liv. iii. 19.

† Hist. de France, i. 261.

‡ Pet. Bles. Epist. clii.

§ Chronic. S. Bertini, Prolog. ap. Martene, Thesaur. Anecdot. iii.

|| Schannat. Hist. Fuldens. p. 111.

canons of that house to place in their cathedrals in the room of seculars. The English Church regarded St. Victor's as the seminary of her bishops. Seven cardinals, two archbishops, six bishops, and fifty-four abbots, in the course of the twelfth century alone, came from that monastery *. How immense again was the number of saints given to the Church by the abbey of St. Maximin at Treves? How many illustrious men by the monastery of Hirschau †? Melrose abbey gave St. Eata to the see of Lindisfarne, St. Edilwald to that of Durham, St. Boisilus to that of Worcester, and Wallen, the uncle of king Malcome, to that of St. Andrew, who, however, refused the invitation, and died here as the humble disciple of St. Bernard in the odour of sanctity in 1155 ‡.

Abeillard himself pointed out the reasons of the monastic state being so recommended, and contrasted the danger of the life of clerks in the world with the security of the monastic life §. "Such was the esteem of the latter from experience of its utility," says John Devotus the canonist, "that to canons was prescribed a life in community under a rule, Peter Damian in Italy, Ives of Chartres in France, and Egbert, archbishop of York, in England, adding monastic vows to the canonical institute ||."

By the institution of St. Chrodegang, bishop of Metz, in 760, the secular clergy were appointed to live in community like monks. Such, however, was the notoriety of the monastic pre-eminence in regard to religion, that in many dioceses the cathedrals were served by monks. In Germany, from the time of St. Boniface, they possessed the cathedrals of Saltzburg, Eisted, Freybourg, Ratisbon, Mayence, and two others, whence the very name of Munsters was derived. Nine cathedrals in England were similarly served, as those of Canterbury from the time of king Ethelbert to the revolution of the sixteenth century, the archbishop being necessarily a monk, of York, Winchester, Sherbourne, Rochester, Norwich, Lindisfarn, Durham, Ely, and Coventry. In

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* Bulæus, Hist. Univers. Par. ii. Liebner Hugo von St. Victor und die Theolog. Richtungen seiner Zeit.

† Trithem. in Chron. Hirs.

‡ Jongelin. Notitiæ Abb. Ord. Cisterciens. viii. 15.

§ Vie d'Abbeil. iii.

|| Instit. Canon. lib. i. tit. 3. § 7.

France the episcopal church of Toul was served by monks, as was, in Spain, that of Toledo, and some others. At the very head of all the churches, in the Lateran Basilica itself, Benedictine monks of Mount Cassino were established in the time of Pope Innocent II., after the slaughter by the Lombards, and in the church of St. Peter, by order of Pope Gregory III., Benedictines having served the basilica of St. Paul from an early age *. The same services were rendered by the mendicant orders in later times. Sixty-six cardinals, 460 archbishops, and 2,136 bishops have worn the habit of St. Dominick; simple friars, without birth or fortune, who had been chosen only through regard to their virtue.

Over the door of the capuchin convent at Altorf I read an inscription, which stated that this house was founded by the inhabitants of the town "for the augmentation and service of the Catholic religion." No happier expression could have been selected. Pope Benedict XIV. styled the abbey of St. Gall, "Validissimum stabilimentum veræ religionis †;" and six years afterwards he called it, "Illustre monasterium S. Galli, validissimum istud propugnaculum veræ Dei religionis." When by persuasion of the good and great king James of Aragon, Barcelona and Saragossa first received the two holy families of St. Dominic and St. Francis, the object of those cities, as the Spanish historian says, was to make head against the two great evils of ignorance and avarice ‡.

It is a problem yet to be solved, whether religion can long continue effective and in purity, where such bulwarks are wanting. In England, it was thought in the reign of Mary, that the Catholic religion was permanently restored, and that every thing would be well again, although there were to be no more monasteries. The oaths of the nobility, (doubtless all honourable men, as we should now style them,) in the name of the whole kingdom to defend that faith, were not however found quite sufficient to answer the purpose of such stability. But to proceed. The utility of the contemplative and interior life being recognized in ages of faith, as a necessary consequence, monasteries were known to be indis-

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* Mabil. Præf. in III. and V. sæcul. Ben.

† Breve, 1749.

‡ Bernardini Gomesii de vita Jacobi I. Arag. lib. ii.

pensable. "How necessary it is to provide for the quiet of monks," says Pope Eugene III., writing to Wibald, Abbot of Corby, "appears from what was done by the Creator of all things, when He defended the cause of Mary against Martha *." "If it be true in general," as St. Bonaventura remarks, "that more circumstances are required for good than for evil †," it is in a particular manner certain with regard to this highest and most divine virtue, "for," as Richard of St. Victor says, "it is to be noted that the grace of the contemplative life escapes from us more easily than that of the active, but it is repaired with much more difficulty ‡." While then all those who would seek no other worth in life, but the inner worth of the soundness of the soul, must provide such circumstances as will enable them at least within their minds to construct a place of peace, those who aspire to the highest life must leave nothing undone that can conduce to security—that they may not, like others, be subject to pass alternately from Jerusalem to Babylon, or from a place of peace and quiet to one of confusion and captivity §. "For the world," says Thomas à Kempis, "knows so many modes of deceit and wickedness, it contrives so many inventions, and has so many quarrels, that no one's peace can be safe, no one's faith firm, nor can even any one easily be innocent unless he separate himself from the crowd of men and seek Jesus Christ, to hear Him teach his Gospel in desert places." "Therefore," addressing novices he adds, "go out with Abraham from your country, and from your father's house, and come into the holy land, that is, into the monastic life, that you may learn discipline, and serve the Lord your God faithfully all the days of your life ||." "How can any one retain the soundness of peace," exclaims St. Augustine, "who is fed with discords and contests ¶?" Therefore, even the adversaries of monastic life, exclaim with Cowper, "O blessed seclusion from a jarring world! Retreat has peace, and much secures the mind from all assaults of evil." Moreover, monas-

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* Ap. Martene, Vet. Script. Coll. tom. ii. 293.

† St. Bon. Compend. Theol. Verit. lib. iii. c. 10.

‡ De Eruditione Hominis Inter. i. 1.

§ Rich. St. Vict.

|| Dialogus Novitiorum.

¶ De Catech. Rud.

teries possessed in a high degree that influence of place which was not unobserved by the wise men of antiquity, as when Cicero says, "tanta vis admonitionis inest in locis, ut non sine causa ex his memoriæ ducta sit disciplina *." Hence, even occasional visits to them were deemed salutary: in allusion to which opinion, Michelet exclaims, "Why should we ridicule these candid ages which believed that they could fly from evil by changing place, travel from sin to sanctity, leave Satan with the dress which was laid aside for that of the pilgrim? Is it not something," he adds, "to escape from the influence of places and customs, to change one's country, to orientalize one's self to a new life? Is there not a bad power of infatuation, and of blindness in some places, whether it be the Charmettes of Rousseau, or the Ferney of Voltaire? Let us not wonder if our ancestors loved pilgrimages, and attributed to them a virtue of regeneration †."

"Hence, from knowing what monasteries furnished," St. Bernard says to those who dwelt within them, "I beseech you, brethren, by the common safety, studiously profit by the opportunity given to you of working out your salvation. Here you have no solicitudes. You have no need of thinking about markets or secular affairs, or even about food and clothing. Procul a vobis, magna quidem ex parte diei malitia et sollicitudo vitæ. Sic abscondit vos Deus in abscondito tabernaculi sui. Vacate itaque dilectissimi, et videte, quoniam ipse est Deus ‡." Thus was supplied by monasteries, what the Stagyrite admitted was necessary to the contemplative life; for after saying that "man alone, of all other animals, can be happy, inasmuch as he has the power of contemplation; and that, as far as there is contemplation, there is also happiness;" he adds, "yet there will be something external wanted; for nature is not sufficient of itself to contemplation, but the body must possess food and other necessaries §," which necessity the monks themselves recognized, for "the first impediments to contemplation," says St. Bonaventura, "may be from the body, as when it suffers violent hunger, or thirst, or cold ||." Monasteries were intended to provide this external supplement, and, consequently, by enabling men to adopt

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* De Finibus, v.

† Hist. de France, iii. 55.

‡ Serm. 2.

§ Ethic. x. 8.

|| Medit. Vit. Christi, lvi.

the contemplative life, conferred benefit upon an immense class of society. For how many are there unfitted for any other life, but that congenial with the true philosophy of retirement and prayer, "and who feel," as Plato says, "οὐ βιωτὸν ἄλλως ποιοῦντι*." The multitude is composed of men adroit in speech, and for communion with the world accomplished; "but," as the poet says—

——— "Others too
There are, among the walks of homely life
Still higher, men for contemplation framed;
Shy and unpractised in the strife of phrase;
Meek men, whose very souls perhaps would sink
Beneath them, summoned to such intercourse.
Theirs is the language of the heavens, the power,
The thought, the image, and the silent joy!"

What an asylum do monasteries furnish to young men of this character, shrinking from the gaze of cold worldly wisdom, "inexperienced in its calculations, unsullied by the tarnish of its vulgar wants, sick of its formalities, and anxious to cast off the mean restrictions it imposes, which bind so firmly by their number, though singly so contemptible?" The ancients had examples to a certain degree analogous to what might be offered here. Nicias was not made for a cruel and unjust invader, and when he undertook the office, and perished after such long suffering, there is no one who does not lament his fate. But in Christian times we find instances at every step. In the poem of the Lord of the Isles, when Edward proposes to adopt a certain young man as his page, Bruce interposes, saying,

—— "gay Edward, no,
This is no youth to hold thy bow
Or fill thy goblet,
Or bear thy message light.
Thou art a patron all too wild
And thoughtless, for this orphan child.
Seest thou not how apart he steals,
Keeps lonely couch, and lonely meals?
Better by far in yon calm cell
To tend our sister Isabel,

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* Epist. viii.

With father Augustine to share
The peaceful change of convent-prayer,
Than wander wild adventures through
With such a reckless guide as you."

And so when Bruce with this page were in the convent of his royal sister, he says to her,

" He is a boy of gentle strain,
And I have purposed he shall dwell
In Augustine the chaplain's cell,
And wait on thee, my Isabel.
Mind not his tears: I've seen them flow
As in the thaw dissolves the snow.
'Tis a kind youth, but fanciful,
Unfit against the tide to pull.
And those that with the Bruce would sail,
Must learn to strive with stream and gale."

Age too, after a laborious life, might feel this want more keenly still, as when Bourdaloue begged the general of his order to permit him to retire from the world to solitude; and souls by violence converted, and risen above the waves which had whelmed and sunk them down, would need the same shelter; for, as Dante sings,

—— " It may not be
That one, who looks upon that light can turn
To other object willingly his view.
For all the good, that will may covet, there
Is summ'd; and all, elsewhere defective, found
Complete *."

For all such persons, life in the world would have been unmingled bitterness, contrasted with what Petrarch writing to his brother Gerard, styles " the quiet poverty, the sweet leisure, the united fellowship, and the celestial peace of the cloister †."

A great English philosopher had the courage to acknowledge some of these advantages, " for some," he remarked, " have little power to do good, and have likewise little strength to resist evil. Many are weary of their conflicts with adversity, and are willing to eject those passions which have long busied them in vain; and many are dismissed by age and diseases from the

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* Par.

† Var. Epist. lib. xix.

more laborious duties of society. In monasteries the weak and timorous may be happily sheltered, the weary may repose, and the penitent may meditate. Those retreats of prayer and contemplation have something so congenial to the mind of man, that perhaps there is scarcely one that does not purpose to close his life in pious abstraction, with a few associates serious as himself *."

But it was not alone to men who embraced the contemplative life, that monasteries were deemed useful; for as they lived not for themselves alone, the whole world, it was believed, received benefit from the prayers and worship offered up within them. St. Augustine in many places remarks that those who are devoted to the contemplative life, conduce not a little to the good of the republic by their prayers, and many felt this as personal to themselves. Thus Ives de Chartres, writing to a monk, says, "Remember me in your prayers, vestræ enim orationes quanto quietiores, tanto saniores †." When John Francis Picus of Mirandula was deprived of his territories, Baptist, the Mantuan Carmelite, having written to him, saying, "I have heard of your misfortune, illustrious man, and to speak ingenuously what I feel, you now seem to me greater than when you reigned; for it is greater to prove one's self worthy of a kingdom than to be a king; therefore I love and honour you, and in my prayers am always with you. And so likewise are all the brethren who are here with me in Christ. I deem that a wretched kingdom which would deprive one of the sweet delights of study, and of friends united in the study of philosophy; and before all the kingdoms of the world, I would prefer, Diocletian like, the silence of the woods, and the beauties of a garden."—The prince acknowledged the benefit gratefully in these words: "I can no more believe that you do not assist me with your prayers, than that fire does not burn; for this is the property of you, and of all like you, who more immediately wait on Christ. By your assistance I think it must have come to pass that the weight of so many calamities presses me so much more lightly than I could ever have hoped or expected ‡."

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* Johnson's Rasselas.

† Epist. iii.

‡ Mirand. Epist. lib. iv.

"The Carthusian order," says Petrus Sutorus, "confers advantage on the republic by its prayers, by its merits, by its example, by its writings, by its counsels, and by its temporal assistance [*]." "The Carthusian monks," he adds, "use daily in their cells, certain peculiar prayers for all kinds of sorrows and necessities that belong to the human race; sedulously they reflect on all the delusions and miseries of life, on the pomps of prelates, the ambition of clerks, the curiosity of students, the elation of the learned, the exactions of princes, the crafts of the litigious, the adulations of courtiers, the pride of nobles, the violence of soldiers, the corruptions of judges, the dishonesty of merchants, the tribulations of the married, the avarice of the rich, the wants of the poor, the pains of the sick, the groans of prisoners, the afflictions of widows and orphans, the oppressions of travellers, the tribulations of the just, and on innumerable other evils for which they incessantly pray [†]." Perhaps, says a modern poet, whose words apply to monks, although he thinks not, the self-approving world, that scarce deigns to notice him, or deems him but a cypher in the works of God, receives advantage of which she little dreams, from his noiseless hours. Perhaps she owes her sunshine and her rain, and plenteous harvest, to the prayers he makes, when, Isaac like, he meditates, and thinks on her who thinks not for herself. Forgive him then, thou bustler in concerns of little worth, an idler in the best, if author of no mischief and some good, he seeks his proper happiness by means that may advance, but cannot hinder thine. Account him not then an encumbrance on the state, receiving benefits and rendering none; for by his prayers, as well as by his fair example and his influence spent in soothing sorrow, quenching strife, and aiding indigence, he serves his country and recompenses it well for its protection [‡]."

"It was," says another of his sect, but lately "to set forth the pattern of a celestial life upon earth, that men who entered deeply, far more deeply than ourselves into the gloriousness of Christianity, planted throughout the land, and resolved to perpetuate for ever communities of of its ministers, whose business and profession should be prayer. They wished to reserve some spots, where man, free from the trammels of the world, might live in his natural state of constant communion with his Maker. They knew that over the greater part of the world, men's sins make the very heavens as it were of brass, that the dews of God's blessing cannot pass through them; and they kept open, in the midst of each nation, some accesses to God, some of these golden ladders of prayer by which men's hearts ascend to Him, and his bounties descend upon us. They heard with an ear of faith, which in us is deaf or lost, the songs of all created things morning and evening rising up before the throne of their Creator, and they thought it shame that no voice should join them from men, his own chosen children; and they kept up their communion with angels and past generations of saints, and the host of spirits with which they were about to dwell, by uniting their hymns of praise, in time, in spirit, in the very words themselves, with the praises and thanksgivings of a world above."

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[*] Pet. Sut. De Vita Carthusiana, lib. ii. t. ii. c. 2.

[†] Id. lib. ii. t. ii. c. 2.

[‡] Cowper.

In regard to philosophy and literature, it would be long to describe the advantages resulting from the monastic institution, which provided houses in cities and in the country, in which were men living apart from the world and above it. "It is sinful," says Cardan, who however always takes the lowest ground in his reflections, "to think men in monastic orders unfortunate: for what calamity can it be to serve God, to apply to letters and studies, to live without solicitude, to have so many excellent companions, skilled in many things, and, as I may say, knowing the secrets of all mortals, to be safe from the anger of princes, from the improbity of magistrates, from the injuries of the petulant, to travel through all countries at the expense of others, and to find a house prepared every where, to be revered by all men as sacred, to be delivered from all perturbations and sins, and cares, and cupidities? If you are in health you have many companions of cheerfulness, if sick you see no one weeping, but many encouraging and consoling you *."

Those who desire to reflect on the more spiritual benefits arising to the learned men themselves, who enter monasteries, should read the first epistle of Petrus Del-

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* Hier. Card. De Utilitate ex Advers. cap. lib. iii. c. 21.

phinus, prior of the Camaldolese, to Petrus Donatus, relating the motives which induced him to embrace that state*; and to discover the importance of such retreats, in regard to studies and to society in general, one need only cast a glance around us at the consequences of abolishing them, at what Plato describes as ἄλλοι ἀνθρωπίσκοι, seeing the place of philosophy deserted by those who should cultivate it, and jumping into it, which is the sad exhibition now presented here; "for as these studies are still the most glorious, men," as he says, "of imperfect and unfinished natures, desire to partake of them; though, as their bodies are degraded by their labours, so their souls are worn down and reduced to dust, as it were, by their mechanical arts†." Philosophy, comparing the foundations of our age and those of Catholic times, will therefore use words like those of Raumer, who, on visiting the ruins of Fountain's abbey, exclaimed, "How miserable, stunning, and stupifying, is all the noise of your machinery compared with the sanctus, the gloria, and the requiem eternam, which still echo from every stone of these silent ruins!" Not to return to Aristotle, who says that perfect happiness is in contemplation, and that men are happy only as far as they participate in that divine life ‡, the holy Scriptures declare that retreat and leisure are required for wisdom. "Sapientiam scribe in tempore ocii: et qui minoratur in actu ipse percipiet eam." After citing which words, Peter, the venerable Abbot of Cluny, demands how can any one write things pertaining to wisdom who has no peaceful leisure, and whose whole life is one perturbed business §? The custom of troubles, as Cicero says, deprives the gentlest men of mercy, and consequently unfits them for the humane studies—"Nam cum omnibus horis aliquid atrociter fieri videmus, aut audimus, etiam qui natura mitissimi sumus, assiduitate molestiarum sensum omnem humanitatis ex animis amittimus ||." When all the clergy being exclusively occupied with affairs of men, there are left no persons of pacific order with leisure to cultivate the gentle studies that cast such a delicious light of ideal beauty upon the human existence, when there are no priests to converse

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* Ap. Martene, Vet. Script. tom. iii. p. 915.

† De Repub. vi.

‡ Ethic. x. 8.

§ Epist. i. 20.

|| Pro S. Roscio Amer. 53.

with nature in the woods, or to draw rich men thither for a moment who might there be awakened to a sense of eternal things; when poetry, and all works of imagination, as of wisdom, become the domain of legists or literary slaves, or traders in writing, or proud, sullen, spiteful, disenchanted senators, who, whatever they may pretend, are disgusted at the emotions of the soul, as well as at the enjoyments of mind and of sense, men often sworn and forsworn, unfortunate beings, who have no longer the thoughts of youth, of virtue, or of freedom; whose hearts are withered; whose lives are worn out; who live only to three impressions, egotism, cupidity, and pride *," will not the ruin of literature follow, and must not philosophy mourn the suppression of those asylums in which the men that were to introduce her to the world were trained up from their youth in the heroic love of God, within the abodes of true peace? Cowper says of the men of England, which was the first nation to abolish monasteries, " that doing good, disinterested good, is not their trade." What becomes of philosophy in such hands? It was from monasteries that came forth men whose trade was doing disinterested good; and therefore circumspect and holy men, who sought to benefit the world, have always desired their propagation. One of the three things which Raymond Lully had at heart, before laying down his life for the love of Christ, was that monasteries might be established in all parts of the habitable globe.

With respect to social amelioration in general, the use of monasteries was no less evident to those who founded them, and to all who had experience of their effects. The testament of William the pious, Duke of Acquitaine, speaking of his motives for founding the monastery of Cluny in 910, will prove the first part of this proposition; for after saying that he makes this foundation, in order that there may be a venerable house of prayer, faithfully frequented with vows and supplications, with a heavenly conversation and all desire and internal ardour, and ceaseless intreaties to the Lord, he adds, "We prescribe especially that this our donation may be for a perpetual refuge to the poor who leave the world, who bring away

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* Timon.

nothing with them but a good will, that so our provision may be made their abundance. We desire also, that as opportunity and power may be afforded, there may be from this time forth, for ever, daily exhibited works of mercy to all the poor, to strangers, and to travellers; and I conjure all secular princes and others, by God and by the saints, and by the day of tremendous judgment, to refrain from invading or diminishing the substance of these servants of God; and I beseech the holy Apostles, Peter and Paul, to guard this house from evil men; and I invoke the wrath of the Almighty upon whoever shall invalidate this testament, which is made for his love and in honour of his holy servants *." The latter assertion is verified by the moderns themselves.

"Here is a convent of twelve persons," says a keen observer of the manners of nations, speaking of Spain, "the four eldest are occupied as priests, with confession, preaching, worship, and the instruction of youth; two others have charge of the church of the house; the six others go out to beg through the city or country, from which they bring home wood, wine, or vegetables. The gifts are so beyond the wants of the convent that every day these monks nourish abundantly fifty poor of the neighbourhood. I have often assisted at these distributions, and I have never seen the superior fail to ask after such of his guests as were absent, in order to send them provisions. Such is the source of this pretended superstition of the people of Spain and Italy, and I conclude by asking, is it possible that twelve men could be better employed for the good and security of society? Besides the material advantage, in respect to agriculture, how much is a village ennobled by the living education afforded by monks in preaching, confessing, catechizing, and encouraging confraternities, and instructing children †."

It was no wonder that the ruin of such houses was lamented by the people. Speaking of the suppression of the smaller monasteries in England, Weever says, "It was a pitiful thing to hear the lamentation that the peo-

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* Biblioth. Clun. 2.

† Rubichon du Mécanisme de la Société en France et en Angleterre.

ple in the country made for them; for there was great hospitality kept among them *." The loss of only one monastery—that of Oliva, in 1360, which was burnt—is recorded by the northern historians as a national calamity, equal to that of the pestilence of that dreadful year †.

Now hear the testimony of one who loved them not: "Half a league from Xeres," says Bourgoign, "is one of the most famous Carthusian monasteries in Spain, containing some of the finest paintings of Zurbaran and Luc Jordanus. The silent inhabitants of this charming asylum make us almost pardon their opulence and pious indolence by their tender solicitude for the two most interesting ages of life; they begin the education of thirty poor children of the neighbouring town, and twelve old men past working come to finish their days peaceably amongst them ‡." "The monastic order," says a modern historian, speaking of England in the time of Lanfranc, "became a blessing to the nation; not only were charity exercised, agriculture extended, religion and morality inculcated, the neighbourhood kept in peace, but, as schools were opened in every diocese, civilization was rapidly and widely diffused throughout the country §."

Travellers at the present day are struck with the useful effects of a material order produced by the neighbourhood of a convent. "The approaches to Huerta," says Bourgoign, "on the road from Madrid to Saragossa are an exception to the frightful appearance of the country; for this village belongs to a monastery of Benedictines, which causes to reign round it comfort, cultivation, and shade; striking difference in Spain between the possessions of ecclesiastics and those of the richest lay proprietors, which is explained by the perpetual residence of the one and the absence of the other ||." Yet these, we must remember, were the least advantages; for it was with a view to the religious benefit resulting from their neighbourhood that men, in ages of faith, desired to live near them. We read in the annals of the Capuchins, that in 1580, when a convent of that order was to be built in the valley of Lagano, the surrounding towns

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* 105.

† Voight G. Preussens, v.

‡ Tableau de l'Espagne, iii.

§ Europ. in the Mid. Ages. Cyclop. vol. iv.

|| iii. 32.

contended with each other respecting the site to be chosen, for each wished that it might be built in its immediate vicinity." Who can doubt but that the illustrious men, who, like Cosmo de Medicis, founded or rebuilt abbeys, were actuated no less with a view to utility than to a display of their own magnificence? Mabillon, after remarking in what a reverential light monks were regarded by Justinian and by the great and learned men of primitive times, continues thus: "For who is there that has a just sense of Christian piety, and who examines the thing before God, but must esteem those men very useful to the church, who endeavour to conform assiduously to the life of Christ; who celebrate the worship of God with all the devotion of which they are capable, offering their body and soul as a constant sacrifice of praise; who retain the ancient vestiges and specimen of Christian penitence in the church; who opened public schools of virtue; who, by their labour, transmitted the monuments of ancient writing to posterity; who gave example to clerks to institute laudable societies; who erected as many hospitals for the poor as monasteries, in which the diseases of the soul were cured; in which baptismal innocence was preserved inviolate, or restored when lost, and in which the wants of all the needy were supplied? Monasteries are hostels, in which not alone the cloistral flock, but, as Leodegavius testifies, the whole world is delivered from the corruptions of the age. Finally, who can say that they were useless to the civil and christian republic, who covered with towns and villages so many provinces before uninhabited and desert, adorned them with edifices, enriched them with letters, and by giving episcopal and pastoral institutions, brought so many millions of pagans to the faith [*]?" A Pythagoræan said of old, "that those who constituted mysteries are not to be despised, for that these admonish men secretly, that whoever shall depart to Hades unexpiated and uninitiated will have to lie immersed in ordure, but whoever goes away purged and initiated will dwell with the Gods [†]." Now we may affirm that monasteries, in a most effectual manner, answered this great end; while, as Petrus Sutorus remarks, "the corrupt manners of men sufficiently show what verbal preaching can do in this age *." "Seculars," says this author, "who perceive what Carthusians undertake through desire of the celestial country, are led to consider that the entrance to heaven is not so easy, but the narrow way †." Useful then was the mere remembrance that a monastery was near; and mark now the effects of substituting lay proprietors for the poor of Christ that were in Rievaulx, Glastonbury, or any other of these celebrated spots. Shall I call old philosophy, and demand what she thinks of the change? Her words would be, "not with a life than which I can conceive nothing more foul, wretched, or contemptible, will I compare that of an Anselm or a Thomas in the cloister. Who that has ever had any commerce with the Muses, that is, with humanity and with learning, would not rather live near that monk than this lord? Come now, compare Scotus, Bonaventure, Dominick, Francis, what domains, what palaces, will you prefer to their delights?" How useful is it to see pass through the streets of some great capital one wrapt up in sable weeds, which of themselves proclaim so many unutterable things, and above all, faith! Truly I felt it so in that happy Florence where, amidst the din and pomp of the gay throng, you see the barefooted friar, or the solemn hooded man, conveying by their sole aspect such a solemn lesson to the rich and such sweet consolation to the poor. "The mere sight of one of these monks," says St. John Chrysostom, speaking of the hermits who came into Antioch, "could reconcile men to the calamities of this world. Who would not laugh at death when he saw them?" Ask now any of the unhappy exiles who have fled from the persecution in Spain and Portugal what is it of which they most feel the want in London, where, as the poet says of his countrymen,

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[*] Præfat. in IV. Sæcul. § 4.

[†] Jamblich. Adhortat. ad Philosoph. 13.

"we grow early grey but never wise,"

they will tell you, as I was assured by one who said Valentia was his home, that it is of monasteries. That is the want of wants: it is the conversation with these pious recluses: it is the peace which flows from the mere

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* Pet. Sut. de Vita Carthusiana, lib. ii. c. 2.

† Id. ii. t. ii. 2.

sense of having access to such men. But there we find them not. So disconsolate these poor exiles pass through the long streets of the million-peopled city, which is to them a fruitless desert, where, as the poet says,

> "each one seeks his mate, yet is alone,
> Beloved and sought and mourned of none."

Moreover, in estimating the use of monasteries, we must take into account the interest which they imparted to a whole country, counteracting, by their local influence, the baneful effects of that policy of Theseus in Attica, which men in modern times cannot even boast of as their own, which consists in centralizing a nation, drawing all interest to one spot, and making it supreme *. What an interest is given to Burgos, Valladolid, and Toledo, by the monasteries which they contain! To what a distance around does the Chartreuse of Miraflores, with its magnificent sepulchres, shed lustre! It was thus that, in ages of faith, the attraction and the charm were diffused every where by means of these institutions; for the monasteries had charms for all; the traveller might well love their hospitable gates, the poor their courts for dispensing charity, the antiquarian their buildings, the scholar their libraries, the artist their paintings, and the saint their churches. Truly it was well for all mortals when there were those holy mountains "where were heard the last murmurs of earth and the first sounds of heaven." There is a poetic influence in the very sentences which record their existence, as when we hear of the Irish monks which at the first sound seems as if to dispel from the face of that glorious island all the cloud of low prosaic associations with which it has been enveloped by the men who understand not its destiny, on whose tongues it is associated with no other image but that of Lord Lieutenants and Policemen. But let us attend to the practical results. What is the first consequence of a religious order being received into a city? Immediately there is a structure discovered with a door which opens to all comers, the poor man, the student, the retired officer, all the unassisted and friendless have thenceforth a point of union where the countless sentiments of taste, connected with beauty and grandeur of

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* Thucyd. ii. 15.

locality, are enlisted on the side of faith, to destroy sin within them, and to set up the glorious throne of Jesus. Now could a solitary curate confer the same kind of benefit as this? Leibnitz, avowing his love for the monastic orders, after enumerating the services which they render adds, "whoever is ignorant of these things, or despises them, has only a narrow and vulgar idea of virtue, and stupidly believes that he has accomplished all his obligations to God when he has externally discharged some usual practices with that habitual coldness which is never accompanied with any zeal or any sentiment." To such censure the illustrious men in catholic times were seldom obnoxious. Petrarch speaks of his own happiness in living near the house of the Carthusians, where he can enter at all times as if one of the family [*]. "I and Picus of Mirandula," says Marsilius Ficinus, "lately walking on the hills of Fiesole, surveying the whole plain of Florence, and discoursing about the best site for a house, beholding the place where the wise Leonard Aretino, and Pandolphino, and Peter Philippo, had chosen for their villas. O happy Pandolph, cried Picus, who, leaving public affairs, inhabited a sacred house—I say sacred, for near this spot is a grove surrounded by twenty houses of religious orders [†]." "The neighbourhood of a monastery wins me still," would many say in the language of the poet, "I never framed a wish, or formed a plan, that flattered me with hopes of earthly bliss, but there I laid the scene."

Thus useful to all, we may remark in fine, that monasteries conferred benefits in a more especial manner on a class of men suffering from irremediable wounds, who, without that resource, would have been temporally and probably for ever wretched. "The suicide of the middle ages," says a late editor of the chronicles of St. Denis, "was to enter a monastery;" for the monk was not like Æolus, who sends Ulysses away from his shores merely because he observes him to be most miserable.

"Ἔῤῥ' ἐκ νήσου θᾶσσον, ἐλέγχιστε ζωόντων·
Οὐ γάρ μοι θέμις ἐστὶ κομιζέμεν οὐδ' ἀποπέμπειν
Ἄνδρα τὸν, ὅς κε θεοῖσιν ἀπέχθηται μακάρεσσιν [‡]."

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[*] Epist. lib. x. 12. [†] Mars. Ficini Epist. lib. ix. [‡] x. 72.

In ages of faith, when men were thus prostrated without hope of recovery, not self-slaughter, as Mortimer says, nor just death, nor war, the arbitrator of despair, the kind umpire of men's miseries, nor the flying to intentions savage wild, more fierce and more inexorable far than empty tigers or the roaring sea; but the cowl, the harbinger of peace, with sweet enlargement did dismiss them hence. Youth indeed has often little thought for what the future may bring forth, and the world seems made for its enjoyment.

"Quand j'estois jeune, ains qu'une amour nouvelle
Ne se fust prise en ma tendre moelle,
Je vivois bien heureux:
Lors je vivois amoureux de moy mesme,
Content et gay sans porter face blesme,
Ny les larmes à l'œil.
J'avois escrit au plus haut de la face,
Avecques l'honneur, une agreable audace
Pleine d'un franc desir:
Avec le pied marchoit ma fantaisie
Où je volois, sans peur ne jalousie.
Seigneur de mon plaisir."

Thus sings Ronsard of his youth, but how changed was he when he sung thus! The world was no longer the same for him. What is its society to those who have stained the childhood of their joy, or who are dragging after them the long chain of disappointed hopes?

"A good society," as a French author says, "provides for every thing, even for the wants of those who detach themselves from it by choice or by necessity [*]." "Omnia duplicia, unum contra unum, et non fecit quicquam deesse," says the holy text [‡]. God provides a contrary thing for each, that there may be a remedy for it. How consistent then was it with the order of divine Providence that there should be for those written in sour misfortune's book, to whom the world is not a friend, nor the world's law, a refuge such as monasteries, where they may exclaim on entering, "Oh, here will I set up my everlasting rest, and shake the yoke of inauspicious stars from this world-wearied flesh!" For, as the poet says, "The beast has his asylum in the rocks, the slave at the altar; a city can appeal to another city to defend it; for there is nothing of mortals which is happy unto the end *." Moved by these considerations, a great French philosopher of the present day, desiring the re-establishment of the religious orders in France, exclaims, "Let us grant to virtue that right of asylum which crime had formerly. There are always upon earth men who are fatigued with life's journey, and no one can be sure that some day or other he will not be of their number."

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[*] C. Nodier, Méditations du Cloître.

[†] Ec. xlii. 32.

Such then, in brief, were some few of the useful ends to which monasteries served in ages of faith; and in conclusion, are we to be told that the time for such institutions to be valuable is for ever past, and that they fulfilled their destiny? But as St. Gregory says, "Is not eternity still at stake, and can there be then too great security for man?" Because the world puts on new attractions, does wisdom require her children to be less and less removed from it? Are there no contemplative souls now in these giddy times, who would best thrive in sanctified retirement? Does the human heart no longer in any instances require association with the faithful? Are all men now fit to struggle against the stream of the life which is at enmity with God? And when St. Jerome paints the charm of solitude, the sadness of the world and its dangers, is this an unintelligible language recalling nothing that we see and feel? Was there ever an age in which all flesh had more corrupted its way, when the friendship of the world was more dangerous, and when it was more expedient for many to separate themselves from it? Yet there are even poets now who seem to think that the age of monasteries is past, as if they could no longer serve any useful purpose. But this is a great error; for were one of our ruined abbeys to be rebuilt and peopled again with monks, its old inhabitants, after sheltering only the owlet and the bat for full three hundred years, the new comers, on the first day of opening their school, might begin with the formula, Heri dicebamus. It would seem as if but one dreary night had intervened since they had last met there. There would be nothing to retract, nothing to change; for the monastic life springs from a source which lies

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* Eurip. Supp. 267.

deep in the human heart; so that such institutions, however nations may rage and contend against them, can but fulfil their destiny with the world.

CHAPTER IV.

Dismissing now the thoughts of men at variance with the truth, and thus prepared against gross errors, our purpose may be resumed with unguarded simplicity, as if we talked with friends who understood us. So let us mount, reader; for the way is long and much uncouth the road, perhaps even threatening what Achilles so much feared, the being carried away by a mountain torrent, like a shepherd lad by wintry floods. I have read in the Annals of Corby in Saxony, how, in 858, Abbo, chamberlain in that abbey, perished in a river while only proceeding to visit his mother at Hilleneshem. The stream, being swollen with the rains, carried away the incautious monk *. Holy hands, however, like those of St. William, have often contrived a safe passage for such poor pilgrims to the desert. So take we courage, for one will is in us both. Let some guide lead on to the abbey! we enter at all events on unfrequented ways. Ah! how does the setting forth on such a quest remind one of happy wanderings among the vast and noble scenes of nature! for amid such, in general, were monasteries found. Is there a wild solemn desert, or a smiling beauteous spot, far away amidst the woods and mountains, which would have spell-bound a Salvator Rosa or a Claude? There we are almost sure to find the peaceful abode of monks.

Semper enim valles, silvestribus undique cinctas
Arboribus, divus Bernardus, amœnaque prata
Et fluvios; juga sed Benedictus amabat, et arces
Cœlo surgentes, è quarum vertice latè
Prospectus petitur, secessum plebis uterque;
Sacrarum scripturarum studiosus uterque
Musarum et Phœbi: non quem colit ethnica turba,
Sed quem Christicolæ natum de virgine credunt.

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* Ap. Leibnitz. Script. Bruns. ii.

St. Basil, indeed, who was the first to establish a regular and constant discipline by a general institution for all monks, ordered that monasteries should be in the neighbourhood of cities, in order to afford assistance to men. St. Benedict, who in the west supplied a similar institution, from the same motive gave monks permission to establish their houses in cities and towns, which before that time had been interdicted to them. The Council of Trent advised that monasteries, especially of women, should, wherever it was possible, be transferred to towns for the sake of many advantages, which gave rise, as in Paris, to abbeys in the heart of cities, retaining the title of the wood in which they had before been situated. But still innumerable monasteries continued to exist in desert places, in spots where every thing seemed to call the soul to contemplation as in primitive times, in the deserts of Pontus, and amidst the caves of Cappadocia. For after the apostles, the first monks retired to vast solitudes, for the sake of prayer and meditation, observing certain common rules, as may be collected from Philojudæus. St. Jerome argues from the very name Monachus, that the professor should withdraw from the common haunts of men; and St. Chrysostom reminds the inhabitants of a great city that they are obliged to admire often the happiness and peace of the holy men who live a solitary life in the mountains and deserts, where they are far from all worldly cares: and in discoursing to the people of Antioch, he calls the mountains and woods the tabernacles of the saints *. Celebrated were the cloistral communities in Egypt, at Nitria, on the mountain, and at Cellia, in the desert. From the latter at a day and a night's journey farther into the wilderness was Scethe, where Macarius lived, but no track led to it, and there was no water all the way, so men could only be guided to it by the stars †.

In the time of St. Jerome the cœnobites had succeeded generally to the hermits, living in companies of nine together, with a tenth to govern each community. The zeal for building these little asylums was great. Dorotheus the Theban used to spend whole days in collecting stones from the neighbouring sea-shore, with

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* Hom. 58, 59.

† Goerres, die Christliche Mystik, i. 190.

which he built one monastery every year for those who could not build for themselves *.

The advice of Cowley, "that we ought in the choice of a situation to regard, above all things, the healthfulness of the place for the mind rather than for the body," was also that of the monastic founders. The oldest monasteries of the south of Europe, built in times of peace and security, were mostly placed on the sea-coast, or on the banks of rivers, and in places easy of access. These monasteries, as Fauriel observes, became focuses of commercial activity: but those which were built in times of confusion and terror, during the invasion of the barbarians, or that of the Arabs in Aquitaine, were constructed in the most hidden gorges of mountains, or other desert places, where they became the kernel of an agricultural population in places that had before only seen wild beasts †. In general, however, under all circumstances, great attention was shown to the choice of locality; for the influences of nature were known to be the chief source of a feeling which is closely allied to piety: and in this respect the monks did but follow in the track of all lovers of peace and wisdom in the ancient world. The Pythagoræans retired to dwell in lonely desert places. The Platonicians and Stoics used to frequent groves and porticos, that being admonished by the gravity and beauty of the place, they might think of nothing but virtue. When Plato taught his disciples, he was seated not in a busy city, or a luxurious cabinet, but under the aerial portico of the temple of Minerva, on the promontory of Sunium, whence you have that superb view of the mountains of Attica and the vast expanse of the sea—of that great and beautiful nature which can of itself, without the eloquence of words, exalt the soul towards its Creator ‡. When Cicero and his friends proposed holding a discourse on philosophy, they repaired to the groves of the academy, "maxime quod is locus ab omni turba id temporis vacuus esset §."

In the first century of our æra, men had begun to read the Gospel of St. Matthew in the gardens of Academus, and soon after we find the monks in such beauti-

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* Sozom. vi. 29. Niceph. ii. 35.

† Hist. de la Gaule Mérid. iii. 484.

‡ Michaud, Correspondance de l'Orient.

§ De Finibus, v.

ful groves as that in which the lessons of Plato were imparted, or else in wild and solemn regions still farther removed from the perturbations of men.

"O happy desert!" exclaims St. Basil, "refuge of those whom the world persecutes, and whom it cannot endure, consolation of the afflicted, rest of those who are weary with the travail and misery of this life, place of refreshment and of peace against the ardour of passions, of safety for the body, and of freedom for the soul! Thy remembrance shall never depart from me! O Jacob, how rich and beautiful are thy tabernacles, and thy tents, O Israel! O solitary life, holy, angelic, blessed! No tongue can express the sentiments of love which I feel for thee! no voice can paint the joy with which thou dost fill my heart!"

"It was in the solitude of Thabor," remark the monastic authors, "that Jesus Christ was transfigured; it was in the solitude of the Garden that He prepared Himself for His passion; it was in the desert that He combatted Satan and was served by Angels; it was in solitude that His precursor prepared for Him the paths of justice: it was from the solitude of Paradise that Enoch was translated; it was in a solitude that Agar beheld the Angel; it was in a solitude that Abraham saw the mysterious representation of the ineffable mystery of the holy Trinity; it was in a solitude that Jacob had the vision of Angels; it was in a solitude that Moses saw the burning bush, and that he received the law *." "If we search the Scriptures," says Hugo of St. Victor, "we find that God has scarcely ever spoken in a crowd; but whenever He wished to instruct men, He manifested Himself not to nations or to the people, but to some few individuals, separate from the common herd of men, in the silence of the night, or on plains, deserts, and mountains †." Hence Cardinal Bona sings—

"O solitudo mentibus
Orantium gratissima!
O vera cordis suavitas
Ignota vulgi sensibus!"

The emperor Lothaire wrote to Raban Maur, when that abbot had retired to a hermitage, and though the

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* Dosithée, Vie de St. Jean de la Croix.

† De Arca Morali, lib. iv. 4.

object of his letter was to induce him to visit his court, he admits the wisdom of his choice: for "the rustic solitude of mountains," he says, "delights the interior man more than the regal splendour of cities; for there no envy deceives the tranquil breast with a cheerful aspect, nor language adorned with flattering colours, with mutual wickedness, fabricates deception." For how many in fact must it have been relief "to quit the busy haunts and the inquiring looks of men, and walk in solitude?" Religion in the cloister did but sanctify the peace such mourners sought, permitting each still to retain his predilection and to say—

"This shadowy desert, unfrequented wood,
I better brook than flourishing peopled towns.
Here can I sit alone, unseen of any,
And to the nightingale's complaining notes
Tune my distresses and record my woes."

She knew in fact that a retreat amidst the lovely or the solemn scenes in which monasteries were placed, can often appease the bitter unquietness which the intercourse of men occasions in the soul. Origen says of St. John the Baptist, "flying the world, he went into the desert, where the air was purer, and heaven more open, and God more familiar." "Whence, O God, is this peace which flows upon me?" exclaims a French poet, describing the divine benediction in solitude, "whence this faith with which my heart overflows? Scarcely a few days have elapsed, and it seems as if an age, as if a world had passed, as if, separated from them by an immense abyss, a new man had commenced within me. Ah, it is because I have found the peace of the desert, and left that crowd where all peace perishes! It is because the soul of man is like a limpid wave, whose azure is tarnished by every breeze that ruffles it, but when the wind dies away, the surface resumes again its smooth placidity." Do you not perceive in effect, companion, what a peaceful influence pervades this whole region? The moment we enter this silent forest of sombre pines, we seem to lose all recollection of the world's discord, and to catch distant harmonies from the very music of heaven!

"O ever-pleasing solitude,
Companion of the wise and good,

Thy shades, thy silence, now be mine,
  Thy charms my only theme;
My haunt the hollow cliff, whose pine
  Waves o'er the gloomy stream;
Whence the scared owl on pinions grey
  Breaks from the rustling boughs,
And down the lone vale sails away
  To more profound repose *!"

To monks the wilderness has a mysterious tongue. "I assure you, Father," says Antonio De Guevara, the Franciscan, writing from Valladolid, in 1535, to the Abbot of Montserrat, "that I never found myself amongst the great rocks and craggy heights, and pathless woods of Montserrat, without determining to lead a better life in future, and without feeling sorrow for my past sins. I never passed by it without going to confession, and celebrating with tears, and passing a night in watching, and making alms, and resolving to correct my life. O, would to God that I were in this country what I promised to be in that holy place!"

In general it suffices to hear the names of the ancient abbeys, to know in what sort of scenery they are placed. Campus amabilis, as Camaldoli is called in the bull of its institution—Vallis umbrosa, that valley of sweet shades to which St. John Gualbert retired in 1038. Monte Sereno, Val-profonde, Haute Rive, Beaulieu, Fountains, Clairvaux, Sept-Fontaines, Clairlieu, Trois-Fontaines, Fontfroid, Bonne-Fontaine, Beaupré.—Such are the sweet, harmonious names of monasteries, derived from fountains, rivers, woods, islets, mountains, valleys, high cliffs, and caverns hoar deep in the shade of pines; names which have in themselves a power to charm the ear, like those of the Nereides in the Iliad, which recall the beautiful translucid things in the dim, cool grottoes of the ocean nymphs†. The Spanish writers cannot treat upon the rivers and mountains of Spain without mention of the monasteries which render many of them so illustrious‡; and indeed, if the poetry and science of the ancients could associate them every where with occult virtues, it was easy for the minds of holy men to

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* Wordsworth.

† xviii.

‡ Andreæ Resendii Eborensis Antiquitatum Lusitaniæ, lib. i. and ii.

fall in with their beautiful suggestion, that wherever a spring rises or a river flows, sacrifices should be offered, and to feel a strong desire to impart to them the true holiness of sweet and beneficent religion. Who in ages of faith could write a history of woods and omit mention of the monks and hermits, or describe the mountain full of springs, *μητέρα θηρῶν*, and not make mention of the abbey on its side or summit? The foundations made by faith obliged old authors thus to blend with geography philosophy and asceticism. It often suffices to hear the names of the places adjacent to monasteries, to know the savage wildness of the locality, at least, in early times, when not only wolves and bears, but enormous wild boars wandering in bands by night through the woods, almost as dangerous, made high walls necessary for the enclosure. Thus in the immediate neighbourhood of St. Gall there are places with such names as these, Wolfhalden, Baernegg, Baerenbach, Waldstatt, Waldshausen *. The house diaries of the abbeys expressly mention the visits of such neighbours. Thus in the curious Annals of Corby, in Saxony, we read as follows: "This year, 923, on the vigil of St. Vitus, two stags came of their own accord into the monastery, of whom one was taken and the other dismissed. Hence we have our Porta Cervorum. This year, 1131, a wolf was caught in our orchard. It had come from Sollingen. In 1140 our huntsman met a bear in Sollingen, holding in its mouth a naked crying child. Being alone he could not kill it. This year, 1213, on the feast of the three kings, while matins were singing, a dog-wolf entered the church, without injuring any one; only on going out he killed a goose. In 1275 a she-wolf with her whelps was found one morning very early in the church of Boffezen, near the altar, the porter not having shut the door †." The venerable Father who showed me over the hermit's convent of Camaldoli, said, "We keep these dogs to defend us against the wolves; for in winter, when the snow lies deep, they could overleap the wall of our enclosure, and fall upon us at night, as we went to matins in the church. The cold indeed is severe; but we are happy in serving God, and then we enjoy the glorious view from this high mountain. We see the stars, perhaps, more bright at that solemn hour, and we admire the works of the Creator." Nothing, in fact, can exceed the beauty of the spectacle from that hill of Scali, on which St. Romuald saw the Angels. The hermit, as he looks down upon the vast wild tract of the deeply channelled and yet unvaried Apenines, can discern beyond them the plains of Ravenna and the line of the Adriatic, like a golden thread beneath the rising sun; while on his left the Mediterranean is at times discernible. When monasteries were abandoned after being plundered and demolished by barbarous invaders, the wild beasts soon recovered undisturbed possession of the ground as the lawful proprietors. Thus after the death of the only monk who remained at Ouches, within the space of 50 years, the trees having grown over it and choked up the oratories and buildings, it became the abode of ferocious animals. After that interval a certain priest, Restold, from Beauvais, being admonished in a vision to seek out the place of St. Evroul, came into Neustria, and after many days being at Montfort, discovered the ancient church, by means of certain shepherds, who were led to follow a strayed bull into the depths of the forest, where they found the old walls covered with moss and ivy, with great trees growing both within and without the ruins. The old men then agreed that this had been the retreat of St. Evroul. So Restold came and fixed his habitation there; and Guazon de Montfort, a noble knight, who had piously proposed to restore all the churches and abbeys that had been ruined in the times of calamity, rebuilt at his own expense this Abbey of Ouches; the workmen making use of the ancient stones which they found there in abundance, along with the tombs of many noble persons; for kings and bishops had been laid to rest there in the olden time *. So also when the Danes mounted the Seine in 851 and burnt the Abbey of Jumièges, the wild animals returned to the spot, and resorted to it for thirty years, during the time it remained desolate †. Sometimes while admiring the sylvan beauty of their site, the visitors to monastic ruins say, with an intention that savours more of hate than love, "The monks knew well

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* Ildefons Von Arx, Gesch. der St. Gallen, i.

† Ap. Leibnitz, Script. Brunsv. 11.

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* Ord. Vit. lib. vi.

† Will. of Jumièges, i. 6.

how to choose their ground." But not to observe that it was their labour which first made it fruitful, it is certain that they seldom chose what men like these would covet; for it was either pious and generous laymen who chose it for them, or else it was to regions wild and desert, often marshy or covered with wood, far beyond the bounds of social haunts, that they retired to build their monasteries. Such was the savage desolation of the island of Lerins, and so infected was it with poisonous animals, that St. Honoratus, Bishop of Arles, who built the monastery there in 426, was afterwards induced to leave it, when he built a convent near the summit of the Alps. Though notwithstanding the inconveniences of that island, it became dear to monks, and one of their most celebrated abodes.

Those Lincoln washes, when Ramsey Abbey was on an island *, or that Romney Marsh, where the Franciscans had a convent in 1264 †, though now the reformed ministers are dispensed from residence on it, in consideration of its insalubrity, would not assuredly have been chosen by our sagacious speculators for their abode. We should find to such men no grants of forest in the original sense of tracts lying out, rejected-foras, including marshes, desert hills, and even waters, as we do to the Abbeys. In the charters of Chilperic to the Abbey of St. Vincent, afterwards of St. Germain, and of Charles the Bald, to St. Denis, and to St. Benign, at Dijon, we read of the forests of the water ‡; for in old French the word was applied to both wood and water.

What is the donation of Hugues, Duke of Burgundy, on setting out for the crusade, to the Abbot and brethren of the Holy Cross? It is the desert of Lachoer, that they may cultivate it and live on it. What is that of Raoul, Sire de Coucy, with consent of his wife Elide, and his children, heirs of his barony, to the monks of Prémontré? It is an uncultivated tract called the Haie-de-Blaissecourt. "The land of Croyland," says Orderic Vitalis, "being marshy and hollow, as the name imports, king Ethelbald, being about to construct a stone church and monastery on the site of the wooden hermitage of St. Guthlac, caused an innumerable quantity of oak piles

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* Hist. Ramesiensis, i. ap. Gale, ii.

† Walding, iv.

‡ Pasquier's Recherches de la France, ii. 15.

to be sunk down, and then from a distance of nine miles from a place called Uppalonde, he caused firmer earth to be carried, and so laid the foundations of this noble monastery, which he loved during all his life, and which from its first foundation to this day, has been constantly inhabited by monks full of religion *." The Abbot Ingulphus gives a similar account of this foundation, which resembled that of St. Frobert in the seventh century, of whom we read that " desiring to find a place for retreat from the world, and many great lords being anxious to honour and serve him, he nevertheless judged it inexpedient to ask them to give any portion of their lands in favour of his projected monastery, lest the solitary life of his monks might be afterwards disturbed by the too frequent visits of secular benefactors. Therefore by celestial inspiration he went to the court of King Clovis, who gave him a marshy common in the suburbs of Troyes, called the L'Isle Germaine. This marshy place being part of the royal domains was full of lakes and weeds, and brush wood; but the holy man, by dint of great diligence, succeeded in draining off the water, and clearing the ground, and then he constructed his little cells and oratory †." The origin of Cisteaux was similar. Robert the Norman, Alberic, and Stephen Harding, an Englishman, after remaining some time in the wood of Molesme, where they had erected some huts in 1098, and observed strictly the Benedictine rule, removed with twenty-one brethren to a spot called Cisteaux, marshy and woody, and desert. Near the wood which surrounded it, was a little church for the convenience of the husbandmen who tilled the lands adjoining. Here was a rivulet from a source said to be bottomless, which flowed over in dry, and sunk in wet weather, like the fountain of the Carthusians. First they cut down the reeds, cleared away the trees, and then built huts with the boughs. By their labour the place became wholesome, and the ground was given to them by Viscount Raynald, and Odo, Duke of Burgundy. The duke subsequently built a lodge for himself adjoining the monastery, to which he used to retire on the festivals. Henry, his second son, took the habit: the duke was buried in their church. They

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* Lib. iv.

† Desguerrois, Hist. du Diocèse de Troyes, p. 204.

assumed the white under-habit in honour of the blessed Virgin. Few, however, came to join them until the arrival of St. Bernard in the seventh year*. In the ancient monastic diplomas and charters of Italy, there is notice of many woods, of which not a trace now exists. Cassino, Farfense, Subiaco, Vulturno, Bobbio, Pomposa, and Nonantula, were all constructed in wildernesses †. The annals of Corby, in Saxony, record the foundation of that abbey in these words, " In the year 818 religion began to glow in a woody solitude ‡."

St. Boniface, writing to Pope Zachary, makes mention of Fulda in a way not more calculated to excite the envy of our contemporaries. " There is," he says, " a woody place in a desert of vast solitude, in the midst of the nations to whom we have preached, where, having built a monastery, we have placed monks who live under the rule of St. Benedict, men of strict abstinence, content with the labour of their own hands. I have dedicated it in honour of the Holy Saviour, and in this place, with the consent of your piety, I have proposed to give my body, worn with old age, a little rest, and that it may lie here after death §." When monks did choose their ground, it was often in " a desert peopled by the storms alone, save when the eagle brings some hunter's bone, and the wolf tracks her there. How hideously its shapes are heaped around, rude, bare, and high, ghastly, and scarred, and riven." St. Balderic retiring into a solitude, followed a falcon, and fixed himself where it alighted, on a spot which was thence called Montfaucon. A white eagle similarly guided St. Thierri, chaplain of St. Remi. St. Gebehard, reflecting whether he should found the monastery of Admontes in a desert place far remote from men, in a valley on the river Anasus, fasted three days while deliberating. The solitude pleased, and the very horror of overhanging mountains surrounding it on all sides, seemed favourable to a life of heavenly contemplation. Nevertheless, the difficulty of approach to it, there being no track, discouraged him, till a certain man, by nature deaf and dumb, suddenly spoke in German, and said, " Begin, and God will finish it," and never afterwards spoke. The monastery was accordingly built there *. The severity of the climate in places to which St. Gall and other founders of the Alpine monasteries retired, may be learned from the liturgy of that abbey, in which we find these supplications, " Auræ ut temperiem te Christe rogamus †." " Ut nobis donetur aeris temperies ‡," and " aeris blandos facilesque motus §. St. Bernard, from the top of the tower of St. Bertin at St. Omer, marked the site for the new abbey of Clairmarais, and what land did he select? A spot amidst vast marshes and limpid lakes and floating islands, which the old romance writers speak of as mysterious and horrible. " It is a cursed place, haunted by the demon," says one: " I do not know how many spectres resort there ||." The monks, however, placed there by St. Bernard, rendered it a delightful solitude, resounding day and night with hymns of love and gratitude to God ¶. In fact many of the ancient abbeys were built in spots which the blind population of heathen times had deemed ill-omened, many of them in forests, as Tacitus says, " consecrated by the old terror," where monks alone would venture to remain.

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* Angelo Manrique Cisterciens. An. 1.

† Murat. Antiq. Ital. xxi.

‡ Ap. Liebnitz Script. Brunsvic. illust. iii.

§ S. Bon. Epist. cxli.

—— " olim silvestribus horrida dumis.
Jam tum religio pavidos terrebat agrestes
Dira loci: jam tum silvam saxumque tremebant **."

Such was the deep narrow sequestered valley of Battuecas, so famous in the fabulous history of Spain, and which became so dear to religion from their convent of Carmelites, which stands amidst the steep rocks half buried in the groves, even still almost the only human habitation in that solitude, through which wanders a quantity of wild animals of all kinds. No longer on the lofty mountains in the centre of Italy, and in the deep woods that clothe them, is one directed to the horrid cave which opens its pestiferous jaws to breathe destruction; but, as on Mount Gargano, where stands the monastery of St. Michael, it is to a house of peace that pilgrims traverse them. Thanks to holy Benedict, no longer is an unhappy name associated with lands which the Allia waters *, or with any of those natural vaults, such as are found on the shores of Cuma, like the vast cavern which heard the secrets of the horrid Sibyl, or that terrible cave in Salamis in which Euripides was said to have composed his tragedies †. The hollow rocks, with their clear sources, so by birds beloved, more beauteous than the Coycian cave, are the abodes now, not of nymphs and demons, but of hermits and holy fathers, who, like angels, sanctify them.

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* Germania Sacra, tom. ii. 179,
† Lytania Ratperti in Lect. Antiq. Canisii.
‡ Antiphona de S. Gallo Cod. 389.
§ Lytania de S. Othmaro.
|| Berthond.
¶ Piers, Hist. des Abbayes de Watten et de Clairmarais.
** Æn. viii. 348.

Petrarch says, that they who behold the holy cavern of St. Benedict, believe that they behold the threshold of paradise. To many hills on which monasteries stood we might apply the Virgilian line, and say of them before so crowned,

"Tum neque nomen erat, nec honos, aut gloria monti ‡."

Such was Alvernia. In the land of Florence and diocese of Arezzo, between the Tyber and the Arno, to the south and west extend two lines of hills from the Apennines to the Alps. Over these rises an umbrageous mountain, which from the east towards the Tyber has an ascent of seven miles, but from the west towards the Corsalo the pilgrim has but three to mount. Upon this rises another mount, all of rock, yet beautiful to the eye, adorned with groves, and raising its head above all the circumjacent heights §. Here abounds the herb called Carolina, the prickly leaves of which defend the flower, so called from having been used as a remedy against the plague by the army of Charlemagne, to whom it is said its secret properties were divinely revealed. Here are impenetrable caverns, abrupt and overhanging rocks, inaccessible crags, and profound gulfs, which excite horror. This is the seraphic mountain of St. Francis, whose convent is built into the side. Every where now are sacred grottos, chapels, oratories, and

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* Æn. vii. 717.

† Aul. Gell. xv. 20.

‡ xii. 134.

§ Wadding, An. Min. iv.

miraculous vestiges of holy men and of the consolations of angels. The whole place excites the mind with a desire after holiness of life, and a renouncement of the deceits of the world, as if a Divine voice were heard, saying, "Locus sanctus est; finem peccandi facito." The mountain was solemnly consecrated by seven bishops, those of Arezzo, Urbino, Florence, Assisi, Perugia, Tifernata, and Fiesoli, at which imposing ceremony St. Bonaventura was present. Where were the cells of that saint, and of St. Anthony of Padua, are now the chapels. The bounty of Cosmo de Medicis, and of his wife, Eleonore of Toledo, to this convent is attested by their arms, which are discovered on the buildings, sacred vestments, and choral books. O thou joyous simple family of Christ, dwelling in this desert, so free from wants, so cheerful, so engaging; happy is the man who can behold thee on the great day when thou dost so devoutly commemorate the grace bestowed upon thy holy founder, when countless pilgrims throng thy courts, and kneel before thy altars.

Other mountains, once associated with lugubrious traditions, became the chosen resting-place of world-worn men. Such was the mountain of the holy martyrs near Grenada, which became so dear to pilgrims. It is so called from the number of Christians who confessed Jesus Christ there during the persecution of the Moors. From the summit the view over the city and the famous plain, through which the river Genil wanders in many circuits, is said to be one of the most delicious in all Spain. Here on the spot which once received the tears and blood of so many martyrs, and where the Catholic kings had constructed a hermitage and church on the conquest of Grenada, to honour their memory, was built the monastery of barefooted Carmelites; underneath which were vast caverns, where the Moors used to confine their captives, and where they inflicted tortures to prevail upon them to embrace the law of Mahomet *.

A similar interest was attached to the site of the celebrated monastery of Cava, five miles from Salerno, at the foot of the lofty mountain of Fenestra, founded about 992 by St. Alferius, of the family of the Pappacarboni, of the blood of the Longobards, which derived its name

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* Dosithée, Vie de St. Jean de la Croix.

from the caves in the metal mines of that mountain, into which the Christians fled from the fury of Genseric, king of the Vandals *. That sombre mountainous desert of Ida too, which Homer animated, resounded with the songs of David, when in the third and fourth centuries it was inhabited by holy men, whose ruined cells and chapels can still be seen.

The mountain tops to wanderers over the ocean stream in heathen and in Christian times were associated with very different recollections. When Jason and the Argonauts sailed forward, borne along by the rapid wind, after passing the boundless land of the Bechirians, there appeared to them a bay, beyond which arose the topmost crags of Caucasus, to the sun's rays alone accessible. There Prometheus, with his limbs bound to the hard rock by brazen chains, continually fed with his liver, a ravenous eagle rushing upon him. That bird they saw at even from the mast-head, flying near the clouds, and heard his sharp scream. The sails he made flap with the rush of his mighty wings, for he had not the nature of an aerial bird, but such as became a monster so enormous. Then after a little pause, they heard the groaning voice of Prometheus having his entrails torn out; and the air resounded with his cries until they again perceived the blood-smeared eagle, soaring back from the mountain. Such were not the sounds that came from mountains when faith had covered them with the asylums of men delivered for ever from the worst of torturers. Then monasteries stood upon the rocks, whose pinnacles seemed sculptured in the sky, dear age after age to all who passed amidst the solitude of distant seas; for there instead of Promethean imprecations, arose continually the saintly orison, and there, instead of victims to celestial vengeance, dwelt convertites, having found ease for all the sorrows of their wounded conscience, and the sweet nourishment of peace with heaven; and oh, to use the poet's words,

> "How beautiful, and calm, and free they were
> In their young wisdom, when the mortal chain
> Of custom they did burst and rend in twain,
> And walked as free as light the clouds among."

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* Italia Sacra, i. 607. vii. 367.

In the annals of the Carmelite order, it is related that St. Louis, passing in view of mount Carmel, was overtaken during the night by a furious tempest, that the sailors despaired of saving the vessel, that the king heard a bell tolling, and on expressing his astonishment, was told that it came from the solitary religious men who lived upon that mountain; on which he pledged himself to found a convent for them in his kingdom if he should escape shipwreck, in fulfilment of which vow he established the Carmelites at Paris.

The blessed transformation came on islands too, as that once held by Druids on the coast of Brittany, where navigators passing by used to hear with terror furious cries and the noise of barbaric cymbals. It would be long to enumerate the islands which became now holy, as Lindisfarne, Iona, Lerins, Lipara, and that on the north side of the bay of Dublin, called the eye of Ireland, where St. Nessan, in the sixth century, founded an abbey, in which was the copy of the four gospels that was held in such veneration, and Beg-Ery, on the coast of Wexford, where was the abbey founded in the fifth century by St. Ibar, which became celebrated for the sanctity and learning of the monks! Thus did the dreary sea behold houses of celestial peace within hearing of its surge.

> " Those trackless deeps, where many a weary sail
> Has seen above the illimitable plain,
> Morning on night, and night on morning rise,
> Whilst still no land, to greet the wanderer spread
> Its shadowy mountains on the sun-bright sea,
> Where the loud roarings of the tempest-waves
> So long have mingled with the gusty wind,
> In melancholy loneliness, and swept
> The desert of those ocean solitudes,
> But vocal to the sea-bird's harrowing shriek,
> The bellowing monster, and the rushing storm,
> Now to the sweet and many mingling sounds
> Of holiest impulses respond."

The inconvenience attending such situations, only furnished occasions for the exercise of greater generosity towards the monks. Thus as the island of Lipara was too small for nourishing cattle, Count Royes, who with Robert Guiscard on the expulsion of the Saracens, had built there the monastery of St. Bartholomew for Benedictine monks, gave to it a farm in Sicily, pasture for cattle, lands for culture, and a mountain for feeding swine *. Islands in lakes and rivers, were also esteemed fitting sites for such foundations. Loch Ree, in Ireland, by reason of the number of monks living in its islands where abbeys had been founded in an early age, was called " the holy lake." On almost all the islands in the numerous lakes of that country, as also on those in the river Shannon, there were monasteries; and so it was where skies were brighter and waters more pellucid, as Nonenworth in the Rhine, and L'Isle Barbe in the Saone can still bear witness. On the latter was a Benedictine abbey in an early age of Christianity, with which peaceful retreat Charlemagne was so fascinated, that he thought of abdicating his throne and of retiring to it. He had formed for it a great library, which the Protestants in 1562 destroyed. Lelaboureur has written a valuable history of this abbey, the ruins of which I visited with melancholy pleasure. The Count of Stolberg before his conversion, was struck with admiration on visiting the islands of Meinau and Reichenau, on the Lake of Constance, the site of once celebrated monasteries. He said that they contained all which man could wish for, and exclaimed

——— " Illic vivere vellem,
Oblitus stultorum, obliviscendus et illis †."

The monks, however, had still better thoughts in seeking these solitudes, though poets may be more able to describe their charm. " There was a little lawny islet," says one, " paven like mosaic by anemone and violet, and it was shaded over with flowers and leaves, where neither sun nor showers, nor breeze could pierce: beneath it lay gems, girt by azure waves, with which the clouds and mountains paved the lake's blue chasm." In ages of faith on such a spot there was sure to be found an abbey or a cell.

As you mount the Seine, when Harfleur and its high tower, the castle of Tancarville, the dangerous point of

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* Sicilia Sacra, 11.

† Reise in Deutschland, 78.

Quillebœuf, and in fine Caudebec have passed successively before your eyes, you perceive at a great distance on the left bank, two white towers detached against the sky, appearing like phantoms on the shore. Isolated at the extremity of one of the peninsulas, these towers, which from afar seem to announce some great city, are then found to be mournful ruins, without any other inhabitants than the family of birds, whose sonorous voices are heard reechoing: such is the site of the once rich and celebrated abbey of Jumiège, which dates from the first ages of the French monarchy. Of a truth one cannot recall to memory the situation of many ancient monasteries without delight. Even their enemies burst out in praise, as in the lines

"Lo! Cintra's glorious Eden intervenes
In variegated maze of mount and glen,
The horrid crags by toppling convent crown'd."

Oh, how sweet it was to sing to one's self the hymn of evening or any holy chant, in memory cherished, while seated on the high cliff skirting a dark forest of pines, which hangs over the Cistercian convent at Freyburg, which the rushing torrent washes, and almost surrounds deep in the gulf below. Hauterive again, founded by the counts of Glane before the city of Freyburg was existing, on which abbey that small house depends, is another spot of which the memory must be indelible. The valleys beneath the monastery of Camaldoli near Naples, which is on a high mountain commanding a view over the whole scene of the sixth book of the Æneid, present an image of Paradise. "I remember," says a recent traveller, describing that convent, "when I visited it, the woods which entirely surround it on the sides of that most precipitous mountain were just covered with fresh green leaves in the month of April, and the little modest drooping pink syclamines embalmed the air with their fragrance. The church of the convent was quite filled with sweet nosegays of these mountain flowers. Ah, who can wonder that the old prophets in their bright views of what was to come, longed to see the joyful days when the Catholic church should extend her peaceful sway over the earth!"

Sometimes the site of some abbeys seems to have been originally determined by certain remarkable works of nature, or of Cyclopean art, of which the history was forgotten. Thus the choice of Glastonbury seems connected with that high and singular mount, on which in the earliest ages of faith in Britain, Phaganus and Damianus, the missionaries of Pope Eleutherius, built the chapel and cell of St. Michael, "that he might have there honour on earth from men who by command of God should bring men to eternal honour in heaven," and where the holy monks from Ireland, who afterwards resided there, had such divine visions, that indulgences were granted to those who cut a way up to it through the tangled thorns, to enable pilgrims to fulfil their vow. I visited it on St. Stephen's day during a wild storm, which seemed likely to sweep off not alone the ruined tower, but the green cone itself. Inhabited by a number of hawks and wild birds, their cry while hovering round mingled with the furious roar of the wind within that roofless tower, struck me with a feeling of awe. The view on all sides corresponded, whether one regarded the straggling village of Glastonbury, whose streets form a vast cross on the ridge of the island of Avalon, or the ruined abbey, or the vast moor and waste of waters that surrounded it in that season, or in the distance, Selwood forest, the scene of Alfred's victory over the Danes, and the mountains of the principality. Where it happens that nature is less interesting, the monastery will often stand near some colossal fragments which declare with silent eloquence, the perishable character of human ambition to conjure up a crowd of thoughts, and excite us to muse upon the destinies of man. Such an instance is presented by that convent of Hieronomites in Spain, which stands near the enormous elephants or bulls wrought out of the gigantic rocks which surround it, so celebrated as the Toros de Guisando. In general, however, the holy founders of monasteries preferred the immutable glory of nature's works. They sought out the precipices and durable forms of desert regions, undaunted by the yawning gulfs or fearful crags, like those that topple over the abbey of St. Benedict at Subiaco, vast masses of which fall each year and never injure it, or like those beneath St. Cosimato on the clear and rushing Anio, where the blessed patriarch so long resided. Yet, however dreary to a stranger's eye, there was sure to be near them some gracious smiling spot with which they were familiar. As our poet sings,

> "It was a barren scene, and wild,
> Where naked cliffs were rudely piled ;
> But ever and anon between
> Lay velvet tufts of loveliest green ;
> And well the monk or hermit knew
> Recesses where the wall-flower grew :
> He deem'd such nooks the sweetest shade
> The sun in all its rounds survey'd :
> And was poetic impulse given
> By the green hill and clear blue heaven."

Often surrounded by some steep and arid wilderness, the site itself is a soft sylvan scene, enclosed and hid away as a delicious paradise.

Great is the surprise of those who pass from Pretavecchio to Camaldoli, after traversing the scorched and harrowed tops of the barren Apennines, the withered aspect of which makes one's heart faint, to come down upon those soft dewy lawns, and green solitudes, and dark pathless woods, and find an Eden raised in the waste wilderness. Nothing can exceed the grandeur and wildness, and even the romantic interest of the scenes in which many abbeys are placed. From the smiling meadows, on which stands the vast abbey of Engelberg, the wooded mountains which inclose it on every side rise up precipitously to the stern melancholy regions of eternal snow.

The first sound which breaks the silence of the desert of San-Lorenzo to the pilgrims in that solitude is the bell of the Escurial, which has appalled many, from its bursting suddenly on them. The blasts that howl round that immense and truly solemn monastery during the autumnal season, when the court resides within it, are described as terrific. These sudden and impetuous tempests from the mountains can overturn carriages on the passage called Longa, which leads from the village to the monastery. Again, what a situation is that of the convent of St. Bernard, on the mountain which bears his name! When seated at night-fall before the fire there, our fatigues almost forgotten amidst cheerful conversation, while the wild snow-drift sounded against the windows, I remember how cordially every one seemed to greet the wet cold strangers that entered a little later, as if from fancying how still more dreary must have become the ways that he himself had trodden before the darkness. Strange wild tales often passed current respecting the neighbourhood of monasteries, and it must be owned the awful solitudes in which they sometimes stood were well fitted to make us believe that there was some excuse for those who related them; for the solemn wildness of the rocks or woods served to give that strength to the imagination which renders fictions such as these interesting to most men. Thus we read in the annals of Corby, in Saxony, under the date of 1422: "Erasmus Drogge, a hawksman and fisher, related to the brethren wonderful things of the spectres seen by him in our woods, and at Wisarah and Netham. If they were all true, adds the monk, I would write them down among wonders *." Again, "this year, 1048, it was said that in Brunsberg is a great treasure, hidden and guarded by a black dog with fiery eyes. Gaspar Gemser, the hunter, says that he saw him. Whether he says truly, I know not; but certain it is, that travellers by night have this year been much frightened by spectres on that mountain." One poor brother seems not to have thought them altogether fictitious; for we read in 1034, on the feast of St. John the Baptist, "an ignis fatuus seduced brother Sebastian, returning after dusk from the next town where he had preached. His terror was such that he died the next day †." There was a cell for five brothers belonging to the abbey of Grissaw, in Silesia, at the foot of the Riphæan mountains, which in German are called the mountains of Giants, because they are of stupendous height, being almost perpetually covered with snow. "Wondrous things are related there," says an old historian, "of a spectre dwelling among these mountains, and appearing in various forms to those who ascend them. These mountains, which separate Silesia from Bohemia and Moravia, extend to the Carpathian chain which divides Hungary from Poland. The abbey of

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* Annales Corbeienses ap. Leibnitz Script. Brunsvicensia Illust. 11.

† Ib.

Grissaw owed its origin to the slaughter of the Christian army under Henry Barbatus, the husband of St. Hedwige, by the host of Tartars, in the year 1241, on the plains of Lignicium *."

Judging from their favourite haunts, monks and hermits seemed to have a predilection for the life which Dante rather strangely qualifies, as only preferable to the tortures of the last or frozen circle :

"Oh, ill-starr'd folk,
Beyond all others wretched ! who abide
In such a mansion, as scarce thought finds words
To speak of; better had ye here on earth
Been flocks or mountain goats †."

Baptist the Mantuan alludes in these lines to their choice :

"Hinc divi sanctique patres in montibus altis
Delegere domos tacitas, Chartusia testis ;
Carmelus ; Garganus ; Athos ; Laureta ; Lacerna ;
Et Sina et Soractis apex ; umbrosaque vallis.
Et juga Nursini facto senis inclyta ; et altis
Abietibus turrita caput Camaldula sanctum ‡."

What Tacitus says of the Germans seems true of the monks. "Instead of inhabiting cities, they live scattered and isolated, just wherever a fountain, or a field, or a grove, pleased them :" "Ut fons, ut campus, ut nemus placuit." Do we come to some sequestered spot "under a mountain, which from unknown time has yawned into a cavern, high and deep ; from which comes a gentle rivulet, whose water, like clear air, in its calm sweep bends the soft grass, and keeps for ever wet the stems of the sweet flowers, and fills the grove with sounds, which whoso hears must needs forget all pleasure and all pain, all hate and love which they had known before that hour of rest ?" There again we shall find a cloister of the holy pacific. Or do we turn to the woods under the vast shade of branches to the pine forest, where the white eagle builds her nest ; or to the denser labyrinth of other trees, whose "meeting boughs and impli-

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* Gaspar Jongelinus Notitiæ Abbat. Ord. Cisterciens. per Univ. Orbem, liv. v. 57.

† xxxii.

‡ Æclog. viii.

cated leaves weave twilight o'er the poet's path; more dark and dark the shades accumulate—the oak, expanding its immeasurable arms, embraces the light beech: the pyramids of the tall cedar overarching, frame most solemn domes within: the parasites, starred with ten thousand blossoms, flow around the grey trunks; soft mossy lawns beneath these canopies extend their swells, fragrant with perfumed herbs, and eyed with blooms, minute yet beautiful; through the dell, silence and twilight, twin-sisters, keep their noonday watch, and sail among the shades like vapourous shapes half seen." There in some sudden opening, which again restores you to the sun, you will arrive at the convent, some ancient sanctuary of holy men, in which, while lodging for the night, you will hear the animals of prey,

"Ore truces ululare lupi sub nocte silenti."

Yet the peace of that house will force you to regard these as the fortunate groves and blissful seats, and soon the trees that whisper round it will become dear as the monastery's self. Deeply hidden in the heart of ancient forests were many abbeys, to which men had to work their way as they could through what might be truly termed "a pathless desert, dusk with horrid shades." In the eleventh century there was a monastery in the forest of Ferrière, so secluded, that if it had not been for certain iron forges, established in the same forest, the place would have remained unknown; but in 1147 these works led to its discovery: for a monk of St. Martin of Tournay, being at Rheims, and having been charged to find out where was an abbey of the name of Ferrière, succeeded at last by means of the workmen, to whom probably he was referred by some monks of St. Maur des Fossez, who had come, like himself, to the council of Rheims *." When I expressed my intention of proceeding to Bobbio, I was told that from the place where I was I should have to travel, either on foot or on horseback, for thirty miles, there being no road to it. "The access to Morimond, that mother of five orders of knighthood," says Dom Martene, "is difficult, owing to the woods and broken tracks by which one has to pass. It is in a fear-

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* Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, tom. xiv. 257.

ful solitude; in a hollow, surrounded by mountains, on the borders of France and Lorraine, in which latter stands half of the refectory *." "We did not arrive," he says, "at the abbey of Molesme until late at night, from having lost our way in the woods, which caused us to travel two or three leagues more than were necessary †." "In order to arrive at Clairvaux," he says, "which is in a valley surrounded with mountains and forests, we had to travel nearly two leagues through the wood. One cannot approach it without feeling one's heart moved with indescribable feelings, which indicate the sanctity of its origin ‡." "The abbey of Prémontrè, four leagues from Laon, is situated," he says, "in such a fearful solitude, that one can hardly arrive at it without taking a guide of the country §." "After passing Kiedrich I again entered the forest," says a modern traveller, "and for above an hour there was little to be seen except the noble trees which encompassed me; but though I could seldom see fifty yards, yet within that distance there existed always plenty of minute objects to interest me. After winding my way through the trees for a considerable time, I suddenly saw close before me, at the bottom of a most sequestered valley, the object of my journey, namely, the very ancient monastery of Eberbach. The sylvan loveliness and the peaceful retirement of this spot I strongly feel it is quite impossible to describe. The monastery lay immediately beneath me, so completely surrounded by the forest, that it looked as if, ready built, it had been dropped from heaven upon its site. The irregular buildings, with its dome, spires, statues, and high-slated roofs, look like the palace of some powerful king; and yet the monarch has apparently no subjects but forest trees, which on all sides almost touch the architecture, and closely environ the garden-walls." This description recalls a scene that once tranquillized and appeased my own imagination. There is a pathless forest on the steep mountains which enclose the convent of Camaldoli. At an opening, caused by the fall of some enormous trunks, I used to sit for hours with myriads of curious creatures all around me, among the weeds grotesque and wild. Before me was a magnificent range of

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* Voyage Littéraire de deux Bénédictins, 140.

† Ib. 185. ‡ Ib. 104. § Ib. ii. 49.

Apennines, richly tinted with the setting sun; and intervening in a deep gulf below, as if painted on a map, lay the convent on a grassy glade, with its interior courts and cloisters all disclosed. Above the forest, as well as beneath it in the valley, are beautiful sloping pastures, covered with the flocks of the monastery; and most refreshing was the cool, delicious air of the breezes which are inhaled amongst them. In the deep silent forest of gigantic pines around the upper hermitage, it is easy to lose one's way. One could only provide against such an accident by carefully noting the relative position of some huge leafless trunks, the growth of centuries, blasted by lightning or torn from the ground, and lying across, with their vast arms interlaced and piled in magnificent ruin by the force of some terrible blast, which had made an open passage, sparing only naked rocks, as it swept through a chasm of the mountain. Loud and solemn are the echoes of the woodman's stroke in that forest, the deep repose of which is only broken by them and the tolling of the abbey bell. Never shall I forget the thunder which rolled over that house when I lay there two nights before the festival of the stigmas of St. Francis. Most sweet was the recollection of having heard complin sung on the evening of that dreadful night; while the heavens were in such awful commotion over our heads, discharging a deluge of waters that sounded almost as terrible as the thunder crash. We remained some days longer, and great was the sadness with which I heard the matin bell, soon after midnight, announcing the last morning of that peace for us. After leaving the bright altars, and the saintly men who did their office there, we walked slowly forwards, and often turned back to enjoy one more glimpse of the monastery. Arriving at last within a few yards of the summit of the mountain, we intended to have reposed some time, before placing that final barrier between us and the scene where we had enjoyed such peace, but an incident occurred which seemed to break the spell. A troop of wild dogs, hunting together, came suddenly upon us over the crest, open mouthed, and then glancing aside as if more startled than ourselves, rushed down the side of the mountain.

That the selection of such sites for monasteries arose out of the peculiar affection entertained by the holy men who founded them, for the beauties and solemnities of nature, is in general even expressly attested by the ancient writers. William, duke of Aquitaine, came one day to a place remote from all human society; so solitary, so silent and inviting to repose, that it seemed, says the chronicle, to be an image of the celestial peace. Bernon, abbot of Gigny, who accompanied the old duke, said, smiling, "Dismiss your dogs, and let monks come here, for their prayers will be of more use to you than all your hounds." Such was the commencement of the abbey of Cluny by a public donation from duke William to the apostles St. Peter and St. Paul in 909 *.

The monastery and church of St. Nicholas de Arena, in Sicily, were built on the spot where St. Leo, bishop of Catana, used to retire, far from the city, in order to converse with God †. We find the monastic flock always tending to the desert or the wood.

At the beginning of the ninth century we read that the holy and learned Ængus, abbot of Clonenagh, used to betake himself for meditation and prayer to a waste, solitary tract, near the monastery, which therefore used to be called Desert Ængus. St. Elphege, even during the severe frosts of winter, used to arise at midnight, while deep sleep ruled the rest of the world, and repair to some desert place, where he prayed until the rising sun put the stars to flight.

It was in the pine forest near Ravenna that the young Romuald nourished his love for solitude and the religious life ‡. We read that St. John of the Cross, going on one occasion to visit a certain monastery, and finding himself in a retired spot surrounded with trees, stopped there to meditate; and that his companions, who had suffered him to penetrate alone for some distance into the wood, found him, after a while, in a rapture of divine contemplation §.

Friar Antonio of Corsica, a holy capuchin, who left his country at an early age through horror at the feuds which distracted it, is recorded to have greatly loved the convent of Monte Casale, from its being among woods remote from men. After the office of matins, he used to spend all the remaining hours of the night and dawn in the grove till it was time for him to say mass; and

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* P. Lorain, l'Abbaye de Cluny.

† Sicilia Sacra, ii. 1156.

‡ Annal. Camaldulensium, i. 10.

§ P. Dosithée, liv. vi.

similarly, when at Perugia, he used to contemplate in the groves of the convent [*].

We find that the monks were quick to appreciate and to indulge this love of sylvan beauty in other men. A modern traveller tells us that on the evening of his arrival at Vallombrosa, he returned to the abbey, after straying in the woods, sooner than he wished, fearing lest the gates might be closed upon him; and that after supper, as he looked through the grated window on the dark woods and swelling lawns of that delicious vale, a monk perceived his disconcerted countenance, and instantly divined the cause. "You wish to wander still through these wilds," said he; then calling a lay brother, he ordered him to open the gates, and wait at them till their guest's return.

"Who does not delight in feeling the gentle wind that comes from the water?" demands Father Diego Murillo, of the order of St. Francis, in one of his sermons preached in Saragossa. "Who does not rejoice on hearing the birds singing from branch to branch in the heart of a forest? Who is not charmed at the sight of the crystalline rivulet winding from the high mountains? and who does not feel his heart leap for joy when he hears an echo answering him amidst the rocks, Ah! these are inestimable pleasures [†]?"

The beauty of the gardens, brooks, and groves of Clairvaulx is described by the abbot of Aldenberg in a manner that indicates how useful he esteemed it. "Good God!" he exclaims, "what consolations dost thou provide for thy poor, lest they should be absorbed by abundant sadness! how many alleviations for penitents, lest they should be oppressed by their labours! The place has much loveliness to soothe the wearied mind, to dispel cares and sorrow, to kindle to devotion those who seek God, and to remind them of the supernal sweetness to which we aspire. The meadow at eventide reminds me of Isaac,

> 'Dum video florem, dum sentio floris odorem,
> Historias veterum memorant mihi prata dierum [‡].'"

Hence in selecting the site for new foundations, we find expressly that attention was paid to the things which Pliny so beautifully expresses in describing the district of Clitumnus—the "munifica sylvarum genera, montium afflatus, amnium fontiumque ubertas."

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[*] Annales Capucinorum, 1548.

[†] Serm. for the sixth Friday of Lent.

[‡] Notitiæ Abbat. Ord. Cister. per Univ. Orbem, lib. i.

In the fifteenth century, Ulrich, Abbot of St. Gall, prepared to remove the abbey from St. Gall to Roschach, alleging for motive the turbulent conduct of the citizens, and that in case of war and the town being besieged, it was impossible for the monks to remain neuter, their monastery being within the walls. "Day and night," he says, "we have no rest: by day we have to endure the ceaseless noise of carriages, drums, shots, and cries, and by night the watch round, and the forcible intrusion of persons into the cloister. Under such circumstances the holy St. Gall and Othmar would certainly have fixed themselves elsewhere. Therefore I have chosen the site at Roschach, where there is a most lovely view over the lake of Constance to Thurgau and Suabia, the purest air, a place rural amidst meadows, vineyards, corn fields, and woods, with abundance of water and stone. There would the abbot and monks be safer and more independent than when guarded by walls, towers, and trenches." In 1484 permission for the removal being obtained from the pope, the emperor, and the general chapter of the Benedictines, the work was begun, but the citizens of St. Gall assembled in a tumultuous manner, and, proceeding to Roschach, demolished the new buildings, declaring that they would never suffer the abbey to be transferred from their town *.

A wood or a desert region seems to have been considered an essential accompaniment to a religious house. The monk, like the Homeric hero, had his ἀγρὸν πολυδένδρεον †. Even in the rocky wilderness of Subiaco, the monastery of St. Benedict can boast of its little isolated wood of olives. To cut down the trees round the desert of Camaldoli was prohibited under pain of excommunication by Paul III ‡. Among the necessary things of which the friars of the Franciscan order have the usufruct, the commentators on its rule enumerate, along with books, woods and gardens §. By the consti-

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* Ildefons von Arx. 11. † xxiii.

‡ Annal. Camald. lib. lxxii.

§ Louis d'Paris, Expos. Lit. de la Règle des F. F. Mineurs.

tutions of the Capuchins in 1529, one or more cells should be constructed in a solitary place near every convent of the order, that if any friar should wish to lead an eremitical life in silence, he might have a hut to retire into *. The Carmelite order also prescribes the having deserts in certain places, one in each province, to which the friars can retire for the sake of prayer and contemplation. Fuge, tace, quiesce, seems to have been their motto. A year was the general period of remaining in these deserts, though it was always left to their free choice when to leave them. The hermits were forbidden, during the retreat, to engage in any scholastic, philosophical, or theological study. During their abode in the wilderness they were permitted to read only the holy Scriptures, lives of saints, works of the fathers, and books which treat on the spiritual life. No secular persons were to be admitted for the sake of hunting or fishing. The houses of the desert were to be near villages, that in case of sickness there might be relief at hand. No one was to be sent there as if to do penance, because deserts, as holy places, were only for the perfect. Each hermit was to have a separate cell; the church was to be in the centre; and the space enclosed very considerable; that, amidst hills and valleys, woods and fountains, the interior recollection might be the more advanced. It is one of these hermitages which is on Mount Libanus †. By decree of Sigebert III., king of Austracia, the monastery of Congnon, in the vast forest of the Ardennes, was to be surrounded by an enclosure of twelve miles in extent, to serve as a solitude for the monks, but they limited it to six miles ‡. By letters of the Bishop of Grenoble in 1084, hunters were prohibited from passing the gate upon the bridge, which formed the bounds of the forest belonging to the monks of the Grande Chartreuse. But while private devotion and the rules of religious orders thus co-operated to cultivate a love for such retreats, monks were cautioned from ascribing more than due importance to this influence of locality; "for," says Ives de Chartres, "neither the secret depths of the woods nor the tops of mountains can make man happy

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* Annales Capucinorum.

† P. Dosithée, Vie de St. Jean de la Croix, x.

‡ Ap. Martene, Vet. Script. col. ii. 7.

if he hath not within himself a solitude of mind, a sabbath of the heart, tranquillity of conscience, elevations in his soul, without which, tepidity, curiosity, vain glory, and perilous tempests of temptations accompany every solitude *." "There is a good and there is an evil desert," says Richard of St. Victor; "the first is removed far from the tumult of vices, the latter is where we find no cultivation of man, no study of sanctity or of religion. It is a good desert when no sound breaks the silence but the voice of the dove, and the sigh which ceases not from the desire of divine love. It is an evil desert when are wanting celestial desires, spiritual desires †." With this distinction, however deeply marked, every circumstance of place around the abbey was, to the monastic mind, redolent not merely of beauty but of thought; and we find frequent indications of the spiritual and intellectual profit which it derived from this habit of interpreting nature. At Fountain's Abbey in Yorkshire, a clear and rapid stream passed under the beautiful oriel windows of the refectory. The monks would draw lessons from this flowing river. Brother Nicholas Facteur was observed one day reclining from a similar window, contemplating the rapidity of the current which passed below, until he appeared to lose himself in an ecstasy. Some of the monks approached and asked him the cause. "From this window," he replied, "I was considering with what haste the river ran in order to reach the sea, and I was lost in astonishment that men, who are enlightened by reason, should not do the same in order to arrive as soon as possible at the wide and vast sea of eternal glory ‡." When we see therefore that limpid fountain delightful to the eyes, flowing without intermission, which is in the middle of the vast refectory of the magnificent monastery of St. Maria Nova at Monteregalis near Palermo, which was founded by king William II. in consequence of a vision which he had while hunting in the forest, we may be sure that it was a source of meditation no less fruitful than the surrounding gardens, commanding those most delightful views over sea and land which the eyes are never weary of beholding §." Or take an instance of the wilder kind. "In

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* Ivon Carn. Epist. cxcii.

† Annot. in Ps. 28.

‡ Le Sacre Mont d'Olivet.

§ Sicilia Sacra, ii. 1206.

the province of Vienne," says Gervaise of Tillebury, "is the priory of St. Michael de Camissa, which is situated upon the side of a high mountain exposed to terrible winds, but removed from all sounds of men, and by position a spot dedicated to religion. The refectory is vast, and exposed to the full force of the blasts. In this is a great window like a door, giving light to the whole. When storms rage and the whole house is shaken, whatever lights are placed in the centre of that window burn on undisturbed as if all was still. The walls tremble; the light of that little candle is not moved *." It is easy to divine the moral which the monks would draw. In fact there seems to have been always care that there should be something in the aspect around them to furnish food of this kind. Often, while standing during weather that would not admit of mountain wanderings under the cloistered arches of Engelberg and of St. Urban's Abbey in the country of Soleure, where monks walked to and fro, from whose dark hoods peered darker eyes, all fitted well for contemplation, I used to remark some who, in thoughtful guise, stood watching the mists sweeping over the mountains, ascending and descending amidst the rocks, or, like that famed artist, Vietro Cosimo, the silent fall of the rain, as if it gave them pleasure; then pointing either to the cattle wandering through the meadows, as if to note some curious trait of instinct, or to the changing hues of the pine forest becoming absolutely black at intervals, so near to the abbey, that one might suppose the wild animals in their dens were within hearing of the holy song. There are whom nothing more delights than such a cloistral view, while groups are occupied in household labours, in the wide adjoining courts; for many things are to be done during such weather within the walls by servitors as by the monks, who only wait the signal of the bell to flock into the church, where swelling organs waken mystic echoes. Hugo of St. Victor borrows an image from the greenness of the lawn which is in the centre of the material cloister, "which," he says, "refreshes the eyes of its inhabitants and renders them more capable of reading †."

The trees and rocks were used by the monks as ser-

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* Gerv. Tilleber. Otia Imperialia.

† De Claustro Animæ, lib. iv c. 33.

mons to their convertite; so when he is healed they lead him forth to show the wonders of their sylvan solitude, and they together kneel or sit by those spots sacred to God and peace. "The whole site of the monastery," says the abbot of Aldenberg, speaking of his own, "is good and agreeable, affording walks full of delight in the valleys, as well as on the mountains *." Thus with our old poet these holy men did not

> "Esteem it vainful to follow fancy's eye."

When St. John of the Cross was in the monastery of Pegnuëla, every morning after mass, he used to retire amidst the mountains of that desert for the sake of prayer and contemplation: he used generally to sit near a spring which was surrounded by wild trees, until he heard the bell for the exercises of the community. After vespers he used to return there until the hour of prayer in common. Frequently he used to conceal himself amidst the rocks. A monk finding him one day between the precipices, asked, "Ah, Father, will you remain for ever amidst the rocks?" to whom the holy man replied, "Wonder not, my son; for when I converse with them, I have fewer things to say in confession, than when I converse with men †." It was amidst these precipices of Pegnuëla, that he composed his sublime seraphic books; as it was in the solitude of Mount Alvernia, that St. Bonaventura wrote his "Itinerarium mentis in Deum," and his "Itinerarium mentis in seipsum," of which Gerson says "I confess that for thirty years and more, I have wished to be familiar with these tracts; and lo! at this age, after reading and often ruminating them, even to the words, I have scarcely begun to taste them, as I find in them always something new." From the figurative language of St. John of the Cross in the celebrated mysterious canticle which expresses the complaint of a soul wounded by divine love, which however he composed in a dungeon in Toledo, it is easy to perceive what a deep sense he entertained of the charm which lies in the sombre forests and the lofty mountains, and the sweet

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* Notit. Ab. Ord. Cist. per univ. orbem, ii.

† Dosithée, lib. viii.

enamelled meadows, and all the beauties of this admirable world.

An ingenious modern author * suggests the propriety of placing inscriptions amidst the wilds of Dartmoor, and even of consecrating particular rocks there to particular persons, amidst those waste and solitary scenes. If so judicious and accomplished a mind could find pleasure in associating the rocks of her country with "fancied genii or divinities," by Druidical inscriptions to Odin, Hu, and Modred, we can readily comprehend the desire felt by meditative learned monks, to place in the deserts round them, inscriptions or memorials to recall the memory of the friends of God, with whom they knew that they were historically connected, or to impart a general lesson of eternal wisdom to the pilgrim who should pass by. When the track was steep and rugged, one would find inscribed upon the rocks some sentence to remind men that the ascent to heaven is steep and narrow, as I read going up to Monte Calvaro, at Domo Dossola; to which convent, so often at the sweet hour of dawn, a holy procession mounts. Marc, the poet, a disciple of St. Benedict, composed verses descriptive of Mount Cassino, of which the following refer to the ascent:

> "Huc properet cœlos optat qui cernere aspectos,
> Nec removet votum semita dura pium.
> Semper difficili quæruntur summa labore,
> Arctam semper habet vita beata viam."

The only inscription I observed among the ruins of Netley Abbey, was to this effect, that whoever did not keep the beaten pathway would be prosecuted, conveying thus a brief but accurate history of the times since that abbey fell to desolation; but were the monks still there, we should doubtless have found other writing on the trees. In the woods where friars haunt we should find lines like these, which St. Francis placed on an antependium of a little chapel in a beautiful wood on a high mountain between St. Germini and Porcaria. Above were painted various creatures, angels, boys, birds, trees, and so forth, under which was this invitation to them to praise their Creator.

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* Mrs. Bray, Sketches of Devonshire.

"Timete Dominum; et date illi honorem.
Dignus Dominus accipere laudem et honorem.
Omnes qui timetis Deum, laudate eum.
Ave Maria, gratia plena, Dominus tecum.
Laudate eum, cœlum et terra universa.
Laudate, omnia flumina, Dominum.
Laudate Dominum quoniam bonus est.
Omnes qui legitis hæc, benedicite Dominum.
Omnes creaturæ, laudate Dominum.
Omnes volucres cœli, laudate Dominum.
Omnes pueri, laudate Dominum.
Juvenes et virgines, laudate Dominum.
Dignus est Agnus qui occisus est, accipere laudem et honorem.
Benedicta sit sancta Trinitas, atque indivisa Unitas.
Sancte Michael Archangele, defende nos in prælio."

Alas! when shall we find in our woods and lawns a similar inscription! But iron hammers, and not the praises of God, resound now on the Wye's woody shore; and manufacturers, impelled by wandering boilers, heed not what would have delighted Aldhelm or Shakspeare.

"O, better were these banks assign'd
To spirits of a gentler kind."

And now if from the profit which holy monks drew from the beauty or grandeur of natural scenes, we turn to consider the sweet influence which their habitations imparted to those scenes, shall we not discover that the service was reciprocal and abundantly repaid? When roaming through the woods, or along the shores of our dark northern lakes, or climbing up the rocks of the wild mountains which hang over them, in company with the pretty playful goats, would it not increase our joy to know that some holy monastery was near, that in an hour perhaps we might be in the church, assisting at their solemn vespers, and hearing the instructions of some man of God? How sweet and solemn is the aspect of an abbey seen through dark woods, through which hoarse winds whistle wildly! and when it is the sole object, how much more sweet and solemn is the music of its adjacent grove under the breeze of night! Our poet says that the chief marvel of the wilderness he loved was a lone dwelling, built by whom or how, none of the rustic people clearly knew, further than that it was reared for peace and for religion, by some wise and tender lover of his kind, ere the crimes of our age had been anticipated in the Christian world's young prime, in height overtopping the woods, and scarce seeming a work of human art, but as it were Titanic. Such was the ancient abbey, seeming to have grown out of the mountains from the living stone, lifting itself in caverns light and high; and how did its voice charm that desert and overcome every other harmony! like the bird which fascinated the monk,

> " Who heard not, saw not, felt not aught beside,
> Thro' the wide world of pleasure and of pain,
> Save the full flowing and the ample tide
> Of that celestial strain *."

Yes, happy is it for men when holy piles are scattered through these vales and forests, when the spirit of the monks is hovering through them, breathing a deep and solemn beauty, and imparting to every thought of the human mind a hue of brightness and of heaven: for then religion's voice, which gives the heart expansion, and yet peace, comes to them in solitudes, " through the whispering woods, and from the fountains, and the odours deep of flowers, and from the breezes whether low or loud, and from the rain of every passing cloud, and from the singing of the summer birds, from all sounds and from all silence." For my part, if it be permitted me to proclaim a personal experience, if I had never seen Altenrive or Vallombrosa, Camaldoli or St. Urban, the beauties of our loveliest scenery would not delight me as they now can do. I should see them with quite different eyes. The lawns would not inspire any bright consoling recollections, nor the deep forests peace.

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* Trench.

CHAPTER V.

JOURNEYING onwards, and thus continuing to beguile our way, let us hear passages from ancient writings relative to the origin and foundation of some monasteries; for there can be no theme more suitable to this pilgrimage, since many of these religious houses were the fruits of a journey on foot or on horseback like our own at present, only involving dangers and sufferings very different from what can be our lot.

"The proscribed man," according to the old German laws, "was to be led into a forest so far as to be beyond the hearing of a troop who waited at the skirts, who were to cry out three times. After that he became an outlaw, and might be slain by whoever met him *." The heart of forests thus legally abandoned to outlaws, was, however, visited by other men of a very different class, who sought the peaceful joys of contemplation, the conversion of these outcasts, and the transformation of the very desert itself into a paradise, fulfilling the divine prophecy which said, "Consolabitur Dominus Sion, et consolabitur omnes ruinas ejus: et ponet desertum ejus quasi delicias, et solitudinem ejus quasi hortum Domini: gaudium et lætitia invenietur in ea, gratiarum actio et vox laudis." Who were these other men? They were monks, and some of them the first apostles of the northern nations, as heroic Percevals or Perceforests as ever figured in the fabling of old romance. Through romantic valleys, before deemed inaccessible, they pierced their way, and through those vast primeval forests of Germany where the squirrel, leaping from tree to tree, could traverse seven leagues without descending on the ground †. The first apostles of christianity built cells in the Black Forest under the shade of pines and oaks. Thus we find St. Fridolin at Seckingen, St. Offon at Schonttern, St. Landolin at Ettenheim, and St. Trutpert at the place which yet bears his name. If we had the details of their journey, beyond a doubt the interest of many heroic fables would seem pale in comparison. In 744 St. Sturm, the disciple of St. Boniface, with seven companions, having pierced into the vast desert of Hersfeld on the banks of the Fulda, erected there a monastery under the

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* Michelet, Origines du Droit.

† Grimm.

title of the Holy Saviour, which derived its name from that river. Here were soon 400 monks assembled besides a multitude of dependants *.

"The herdsman of the parish," say the ancient German laws, "may advance into the forest with his troop, as far as he can reach with throwing his stick †." The interior must have been sufficiently dangerous then. However, the pastor of souls was to be more courageous, and the monks accordingly penetrated far beyond such limits, and often for the express purpose of recovering some lost member of the Christian flock, as in the instance recorded of St. Seine, or St. Sequanus, founder of the abbey which bore his name in the sixth century. "When Seine," we read, "saw himself well instructed in the doctrine of the divine Scriptures and learned in the monastic rules, he sought a proper place to build his monastery. As he searched through the country, and communicated his plan to his friends, one of his relations, Thiolaif, said to him, 'Since you ask me, I will point out a place where you can establish yourself, if your plan be inspired by the love of God. There is a tract which belongs to me, if I mistake not, by hereditary right, but the people who inhabit it resemble wild beasts, and feed upon human flesh, so that it is not easy to pass among them without a troop of armed men at one's command.' The blessed Seine answered, 'Show me this place, in order that if my desires are conceived by a divine instinct all the ferocity of these men may be changed into the gentleness of the dove.' Having then taken some companions, they came to the place which had been mentioned. It was a forest where trees seemed to touch the clouds, and of which the solitude had not been disturbed for a long time; they were asking how they could penetrate into it, when a winding path was discovered, but so narrow and full of briars that they could hardly put their feet on the same line, or make one foot follow the other, so thick were the branches. However, after much labour and with torn vestments, they penetrated to the depths of this wild forest, and at length they perceived the narrow opening of a cavern, so dark that the wild beasts themselves would fear the entrance. That was the robber's cave, and the abode of unclean spirits.

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* Schannat, Historia Fuldensis, pars 1.

† Grimm. 62.

When they approached it, Seine, agreeable to God, bowed his knees and offered up a prayer with tears, saying, 'O Lord, who hast made heaven and earth, and who grantest the prayer of those who supplicate thee, from whom all good proceeds, and without whom all the efforts of human weakness are vain, if you command that I should fix myself in this solitude, let me know thy will, and prosper these commencements.' When he had finished his prayer, he rose up and lifted his hands to heaven, with weeping eyes. Knowing, then, that it was under guidance of the Saviour that he had come to this dark forest, after having blessed the ground, he set about laying the foundation of a little cell on the spot where he had first put himself on his knees. The report of his arrival came to the ears of the neighbouring people, who being moved by a divine impulse, exhorted each other, and approached to visit him. As soon as they saw him, from wolves they became lambs, in so much that they who had before been a source of terror were now the ministers of assistance; and from that time this place became the abode of innocence, after being the haunt of cruel robbers and demons *." When St. Gall asked the deacon Hiltibald, who knew all the desert from his habits of wandering in quest of fish and of hawks, whether he could lead him to a spot favourable for a monastery, the deacon replied, "This solitude abounds with watery places, lofty mountains, deep narrow valleys, and woods full of hurtful beasts; for besides stags and flocks of harmless animals, there are many bears, innumerable boars and ravenous wolves without number, so that I fear you will be devoured if you enter it." Next morning, however, at daybreak, they began to penetrate into it, and about nones came to the brook Staina, where was a spot that pleased the man of God, which he marked with a cross †.

St. Liudger and his brethren being anxious to construct a monastery that would be secure from the future desolations of the maritime country, after much deliberation fixed upon a place within a great forest near the river Rura, which was afterwards called Werden. Having pitched their tents, they prepared to cut down the trees and make a sufficient space, but they stood so thick, and their

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* Acta Sanct. Ord. S. Ben. tom. i. 264.

† De Vita B. Galli Auct. Walafried Strabo, c. x.

branches were so interlaced, concealing the sky, that it seemed a hopeless undertaking to set about building a habitation in such a wilderness. That night the holy man rose three times to prayer, placing himself under a great tree. After the third time the night, which had been before clear and serene, became obscured; the moon and stars were covered with clouds, and a mighty tempest burst over the forest. The gnarled trunks of many centuries fell before that stern blast, and the elements of the world were made to save the servants of God. At break of day the task was accomplished ; the trees lay prostrate piled on all sides, and a sufficient space appeared for the site of the monastery. One only tree on that spot was left standing; it was that under which the man of God prayed; but when this was afterwards cut down for the use of the church, a stone was placed on the same spot to be a memorial for ever *.

To the vast solitude of the Vosges, bordered on the east by Alsace and on the west by Burgundy, a region full of high mountains, with hideous rocks rising up and crowning them, in a manner resembling castles, with deep valleys between them, perfectly black with the quantity of pine wood, and inhabited only by wild beasts, many holy men of God bent their steps, and there built houses of religion. Thus St. Gundelbert penetrated into it in the reign of king Childeric, fixing his abode in the spot which is now Sens, where he built a monastery under the rule of St. Benedict, and became its abbot †.

St. Dedatus, leaving his brethren, was another who pierced through this tract of desolation : he passed we read through difficult mountains and valleys till at length he came to a spacious vale covered with thick wood and watered by streams, where he built an oratory under the invocation of St. Martin, and on the declivity of the hill a church under that of St. Maurice, and near it another in honour of the mother of Christ, round which was a cloister for monks. It was, however, when Gontran was king of Burgundy, and Childebert of Austrasia, that this desert received its most renowned pilgrim and apostle in St. Columban, who arrived there when he was 30 years of age. Born in Ireland about the year 560, in his youth he applied to learning, and made great pro-

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* Acta S. Ord. Bened. Sæcul. iv. p. 1,

† Chronic. Senoniensis, lib. i. 2, ap. Dacher. Spicileg. iii.

gress, but fearing the temptations that surrounded him, he left his birth-place, notwithstanding the opposition of his mother, and went into another province of Ireland, putting himself under the conduct of the holy and learned Silenus. In this school he became profound in the holy Scriptures, and composed several treatises, among which was a Commentary on the Psalms. The love of God daily increasing in him, he forsook the world, and became a monk in Bangor, where, after living several years, he began to desire, like Abraham, to travel into a strange country. Acquainting the abbot with his intention, who, with much reluctance, granted him 12 monks, he passed over with them into England and thence into France. To the desert of the Vosges he came, and became so enamoured of its peace that he resolved to remain in it. Finding an old ruined castle called Anagraïs, he made choice of it for his monastery, where, after living for some time while supported by the charity of the natives, he resolved to found another abbey in the same desert. In the year 590 he discovered an old castle eight miles distant from the first, which had once been strongly fortified. This was called Luxeuil, in which he placed his community; and finally his third cloister of Fontaines was similarly placed in an old castle on the borders of Burgundy and Lorraine *. This transformation of castles for purposes of hostility into the asylums of peace must be remarked as an interesting circumstance in the history of pacific institutions. It is easy to multiply instances. In 922 St. Guibert or Wibert, the son of Litholde, changed his castle of Gemblours into the monastery which became so celebrated. Ittingen, which Werner, abbot of St. Gall, acquired for his abbey, had been an old castle, which Albert Berthold and Ulrich had changed into an Augustinian convent.

In 1137 William de Glana, of the illustrious family of the counts of Vienne, desiring to found the Cistercian monastery of Hauterive, actually demolished his magnificent castle, which was about 500 paces distant from the spot which he had selected for the foundation †. In Spain many of the ancient castles and towers which had been built against the incursions of the Moors, were con-

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* Jonas in Vit. S. Columb. ap. Mabil.

† Fundatio Monast. de Alta Ripa, ap. Martene, Vet. Script. t. vi.

verted, as that of Ucles, near Tarancon, into the peaceful asylums of a religious community. When Adelaide, mother of Louis VII., instituted the Abbey of St. John-au-Bois, in the old Merovingian Palace of Cuise, where the relics of St. Euphrosine drew crowds of pilgrims *, or even when Charles the Bald, in 877, founded the Abbey of St. Corneille, in his own palace at Compiegne, the metamorphosis perhaps was no less significative of a triumph of peace, and of its holy influence. It was indeed a favourite act of devotion in the middle ages to consign to God whatever had been used by wicked men in their machinations against peace. "A certain devout soldier, Oylardus de Wimilio," as we read in the Chronicle of St. Bertin, "knowing that there was a wood between Gisnes and Wissant, inhabited by robbers and murderers, and therefore called Zoudenvelt, or the field of sinners, purchased the property through a desire to purge it from such an evil, and having driven out the robbers and murderers, he built a chapel and convent there, and placed lay brothers in it to serve the poor and show hospitality to travellers: he became so venerated in that wood, that he used to be called St. Oylard. The wood itself changed its name, and became Zantenvelt, or the field of saints †." When blood had stained the soil, whether shed in ranged battles or in single combat, houses of peace and of atonement rose.

In the same chronicle we read that the monastery of Bellolocus, in Flanders, was founded by Count Eustache, and endowed for the soul of a certain knight whom he had slain in a tournament ‡. The abbey of Slotp, in Pomerania, was founded in 1140 by Ratisborus, prince of the Pomeranians and Vandals, on account of the murder of his brother, Duke Wartislaus, who in 1136 was killed by robbers on that spot §. After the great victory in 1348 the Teutonic knights founded the monastery of Königsberg; and after the battle near the Rudau, in 1370, the grand master, Winrich von Kniprode, founded the beautiful Augustinian convent of Heiligenbeil ||.

In many of the ancient Basilicas of Rome, we find

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* Hist. de Soissons, ii. 134.

† Chron. S. Bertini, c. xlii. p. i. ap. Martene, Thes. Anecdot. iii.

‡ c. xlii. p. 1.

§ Gaspar Jongelinus Notit. Abb. Ord. Cist. iii. 70.

|| Voight, Geschichte Preussens, v.

tablets suspended, containing a short history of the circumstances attending their foundation; and if a similar custom does not exist in monasteries, the cause must be very different from a want of materials to render such accounts interesting. The houses of the monks, like those of some noble families in the world, had their traditional, and often historical, claim to an origin truly heroic, sometimes terrible and ineffably sad, and not unworthy of being sung by poets. A holy conversation, or the praise of some friend of God, elicited without premeditation from the lips of youth, were sometimes, it is true, the sole facts which gave rise to such foundations, or directed their destination.

Levitius, on his return from Jerusalem, after spending some time in the monastery of La Cava, came to Mount Albancta, intending to build a monastery there. A certain scholar boy coming to him, the holy man asked him whether he could sing well, and the lad answering that he could, he ordered him to sing whatever first came into his mind, being secretly resolved that he would place the church under the invocation of whatever saint the boy should select for the subject of his song. Scholars then must have been generally more pious in their selections: at all events, this boy sung the response, 'Veni electa mea,' and the rest, with great sweetness. The holy man accordingly placed the monastery under the invocation of blessed Mary *. Sooth, this is a simple and most unpretending commencement, and that of many others was no less so, being only some word of devout exhortation, when some holy pilgrim upraised his charmed voice to pour on evil men the love that lay hovering within his spirit-soothing eyes. At such sounds the walls of immense monasteries used to arise in solitary places, as we read in the fables of old of the walls of Thebes being moved by the music of Amphion's lyre. Gratitude led to others, as when Vaniugus, a rich nobleman in the days of St. Ouen, having fallen sick at a place called Fescamp, in Normandy, and recovered, built there afterwards a magnificent abbey, and endowed it with great means.

But their origin was not always thus. Dark tragedies, acts of immortal heroism, marvellous conversions of ferocious men, such were often the circumstances in the first page of their history, requiring no poetic skill to

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* Chronic. S. Monast. Casinensis, lib. ii. c. 30.

weave into legends, resembling the grandest page of old romance, quite as fruitful in interest for the imagination, with the additional charm of being unquestionably true. In the first place, many abbeys, like that of Saints Vincent and Anastasia delle Tre-fontane, at the Salvian waters, near Rome, which was founded in 626 by Honorius I., increased by Pope Leo III. and Charlemagne, and rebuilt in 1221 by Honorius III.*, were standing monuments from early times of martyrdom, marking the precise ground on which the seed of the church had fallen. This was the case near Palermo, where the monastery of St. Agatha de Petra was founded on the spot where stood the stone, from which St. Agatha mounted the horse when going to suffer for Christ at Catana†.

The famous abbey of St. Laurence, without the walls of Liege, was built on the spot where the murderers of St. Lambert, after perpetrating their crime, divided the spoil, and slew each other, while so engaged, sending their souls mutually to Satan. "For," says an historian, "as, according to the laws of war, the victor may take what he likes from the conquered, so here, in order that where sin had abounded, grace might the more abound, a church of God is built, and the signs of victory set up‡."

The domestic legends of the monasteries generally indicate three sources from which they took their beginning—remorse, grief, and sanctity of purpose; the latter beyond comparison being the most productive, but the former connected with the most striking narratives. Such are the anecdotes relative to the origin of many of those Merovingian and Carlovingian abbeys, which, like that of St. Germain des Près, at Paris, are often clearly monuments of repentance and of the power of conscience, though the secret motive, as far as expression, might remain buried with their founders. In the year 1000, when the abbey of St. Germains des Près was rebuilt, the great tower, which now exists, and the portal, were left as before. At this portal were statues of eight kings, four on the right hand and four on the left. One of these held in his hand two scrolls, and there was written Clodomer—name so tragic! the other, the last on the right, had no circlet round his head as the others, denoting the belief of the person enjoying eternal beatitude, and, instead of scrolls, he held a writing open, on which was written the first and last letters of the name of Clotaire: these were—the murderer and his victim. Let us, however, hear the express testimony of some monastic chronicles, relating to the events which gave rise to their respective houses.

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* Notit. Abbat. Ord. Cister. vii. † Sicilia Sacra, i. 311.

‡ Hist. Monast. S. Laurent. Leodiens. ap. Martene, Vet. Script. iv. 1039.

The monastery of Las Santas Crewses, in Catalonia, was founded by Peter, king of Aragon, in 1152, in a spirit of penitence for his crime in having put to death the Archbishop of Tarragona, for desiring the cross to be borne before him as primate. "It was thought," adds the historian, "that crosses of fire were seen at night over the place, which gave rise to the name *."

Concerning the convent of Frauenalb, in the Black Forest, there is the following popular tradition:—Count Erchinger inhabited the castle of Magenheim. He was at table with Frederic, Duke of Suabia, an oppressor of his vassals, when it was announced that a stag had been seen in the forest of Stremberg. Albert de Simmern, his nephew, rose, mounted on horseback, and set off in pursuit. Suddenly he met a man of a horrible aspect, who bade him fear not, but follow him. Albert obeyed; passing a meadow, he saw an immense castle before him, where he was received by a crowd of servants. Introduced into the hall, he found the castellan in the midst of his courtiers, who welcomed him, and offered him the cup. Not a word was spoken: at a sign by his guide the youth left the hall and mounted again. On their way the awful stranger thus addressed him: "The seigneur at table is your uncle Frederic, who has fought so bravely in the Holy Land: but he oppressed his vassals. We, the counsellors and servants of his despotism, suffer now the just penalty of our criminal compliance with his tyranny, until it shall please God to pardon us. Albert, you will arrive at power. Do not imitate your uncle. Look now, for the finger of God is about to appear." Albert turned his head back, and saw the castle which he had just left in flames. In terror he returned to Magenheim, but Frederic could hardly recognise him, his beard and hair having become white. He related his adventure, and asked the permission of Erchinger to build a church in the place where the phantom had appeared; and such was the origin of the abbey of Frauenalb.

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* Ib. lib. vi. 13.

The great monastery of Fürstenfeld, in Bavaria, owed its existence to a horrible event, which is thus related: For the sake of mutual protection against robber-castles and lawless oppressors, many states of the middle Rhine had entered into a league with princes and counts, among whom was the archduke and count palatine, Louis of Bavaria, eldest son of Otho. To discharge the personal service of the league, he left Munich, and went to his palatinate on the Rhine, leaving behind him his young wife Maria, daughter of Henry the magnanimous, Duke of Brabant, whom he had lately married. For security he placed her in the fortress of Mangoldstein, near Donauwörth. Elizabeth, his sister, the queen of Jerusalem, and widow of the emperor Conrad, remained with her to partake of her solitude. With the archduke Louis went Henry von Hirschau, a wild and savage noble, but distinguished among all other knights by his strength, boldness, and address. Louis depended on him greatly, and even Maria herself prized him. Once, as he was playing at chess with her, he prayed her to allow him to address her with "Thou," as other high subjects; adding that he would be her knight; but the countess turned away from him instantly. This circumstance is related in an old manuscript of the abbey of the holy cross at Donauwörth, composed by Beck, the prior of that house. Already had a year elapsed, and the winter was returning. The noble lady mourned for her husband, and intreated him in the tenderest style to return. She also wrote to the knight Henry to beg that he would persuade her lord to that effect, and added, that she would then grant him what he had formerly sought. Her letter to the archduke was sealed with red, that to the knight with black wax. On giving them to the messenger, she charged him not to forget the signification, as he could not read the address; but through carelessness he gave the knight's letter to the count, who, on reading it, misconstrued the words, and fell into a horrible paroxysm of rage and jealousy. On the spot he felled the messenger to the ground, and, mounting the fleetest horses, hastened to Donauwörth. As he entered the castle, he struck down the porter who came out to him, and on the steps slew Helika von Brennberg, a noble lady of the countess, who had come to greet him. Four other maidens he flung from the battlements of the castle, and then seated himself in the great hall, commanding a boy to summon the countess. In vain did she protest her innocence, and call heaven and earth to witness it. Not even the Queen Elizabeth, who stood by, could appease that furious husband, and he caused his wife to be beheaded. This was in 1256. When reason and affection returned, his sorrow and remorse were boundless: he proposed pilgrimages and penances, and it is a popular tradition still, that in one night his hair turned grey. To Rome he went, and sought penance from the sovereign pontiff, Alexander IV. At first it was appointed that he should set out for the Holy Land with 1000 knights, but there were so many obstacles, and his presence was so necessary in Bavaria, and on the Rhine, that it was finally determined, besides other acts proclaiming penitence, he should build a monastery, and introduce the Carthusians into Bavaria: but this plan was changed for that of a Cistercian abbey, for the site of which much difficulty was encountered; so that it was not till after the third attempt in 1262 that the monks succeeded in establishing themselves; and the place obtained was in the garden of a noble knight, Eberhard, who from his castle on a hill above it used to hear at night strange sounds of workmen building, and of a heavenly music, which he took for a sign that he ought to comply, which he did accordingly, and the holy men were then established and endowed, and the place was called Fürstenfeld. Here was read the inscription,

"Conjugis innocuæ fusi monumenta cruoris
Pro culpa pretium claustra sacrata vides."

And again,

"Bojorum clarus jacit hæc fundamina princeps
In pretium culpæ conjugis innocuæ."

Archduke Lewis, the founder, died in 1294 at Heidelberg, in the very room in which he was born. He had ordered his body to be buried at Fürstenfeld, which convent was still further enriched by his son and successor, Archduke Rudolf. Here lay buried also Anne, his second wife, daughter of Conrad, Duke of Poland, and Lewis, son of the founder, who was slain in 1284 in a tournament at Norimberg *.

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* Jaeck Gallerie der Klöster Deutschlands. Jongelinus, Notit. Abbat. Ord. Cister. per Univers. Orbem, liv. iii. 17.

In the time of the blessed Hydulph, Archbishop of Treves, many people were still abandoned to idolatry. The holy man, and his brother Erard, had for some time lived in a monastery of the solitude of the Vosges, when it happened that a blind daughter, who had been just born to a noble, was carried to the monastery; for her father, because she had been born blind, had given orders that she should be put to death; but the mother, having heard of his intention, sent her away by a certain old woman who was familiar with her, preferring rather to have her banished than put to death. The two holy brethren, finding out that she was the offspring of such parents, and not yet regenerated by baptism, baptizing her, called her Odilia. The chronicle records, "that she was raised from the sacred font illumined both as to her mind and body. However, in process of time, when she came to years of discretion, her brother, who remained with his father, hearing that his sister who had been born blind was restored to sight, rejoiced greatly, and sent messengers with orders that Odilia should be brought to him; which, when his father discovered, he ordered his son into his presence, and asked him how he had dared to bring back a girl who had been born blind? The son answering that he had done it through hope of his father's benignity, the father, in a transport of rage, smote him with the staff which he carried, and killed him. When he found himself thus left without an heir, he conceived a sudden affection for his daughter Odilia. So that in course of time, in the very castle of her father, which is called Hoemborch, she built a cloister of St. Benedict, and enriched it with her own patrimony *."

Fontevrauld owed its origin to a conscience suddenly illumined by divine grace. Evrauld was a gentleman who in his youth was abandoned to a profligate life, which he led until he had expended all his rich possessions, and was reduced to indigence. In this state he became captain of a gang of robbers, and haunted the forests of this country, usually dwelling near a fountain, where he constructed a kind of tower, from which he used to sally forth, and scour the highways; and no officers of justice could extirpate this nest of mischief. What men could not effect was, however, accomplished by God in a more gentle manner than by the sword.

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* Chronic. Senoniens. c. 14, ap. Dacher. Spicileg. iii.

As all the world talked of this desperate band of robbers, God inspired a famous doctor of Paris, a saint, and a great preacher, Robert de l'Aubrussel, with a strong desire to undertake their conversion. He commended himself to heaven, and set out for the forest, where he was soon taken by the robbers, and led before Evrauld, who desired him to give up his money. "Willingly," said he; "but in return you must give me your souls for God:" and therewith he began to speak to them of the eternal judgment of God, and the shame and infamy of their own lives: and he succeeded in awakening their consciences. Then he dressed that wildness into a retreat like a new paradise, and built a monastery, calling it Fontevrauld, from the fountain and the name of the convertite; and Robert remained with them, and all the country flocked thither to behold this wonderful change wrought by the hand of God. A very ancient manuscript of the house still existing contained a prediction, however, that in the course of ages this sanctuary would again fall into the hands of the wicked, and become peopled with its old inhabitants *.

The origin of the abbey of St. Tron, or Vasor, in the diocese of Liege, involves a narrative which I long ago promised to give my reader †.

"Count Eilbert, its founder, was one of the most powerful nobles and valiant warriors in the time of the first Otho. It happened once that this martial count was walking in the place where a great fair is held by the cross that stood near his castle, where merchants and people from all sides have resort to sell and exchange their various goods. As he walked through the crowd he saw a horse of great power and admirable beauty, which seemed to him like a tower of strength, if by any manner of bargain he could procure it for himself. Now the owner of the horse was a certain clerk, born of noble parents, and a canon of the church of St. Mary the greater at Rheims. So when the count and the clerk, with mutual affability, had held a long conversation respecting the horse, they came to an agreement that the former was to have it for a certain price; but as he had not at the time sufficient money, he went immediately to Heresinda, his most noble wife, seeking counsel from

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* Which has been literally fulfilled, as it is now a prison.

† In Book ii. p. 277.

her as to what he ought to do; for on no account whatever would he allow the horse to be removed from him, saying, that by his assistance he would be able to avert all the injuries of his enemies, and escape from all wreck of fortune. So being in a great hurry to have done with the clerk, without the counsel of his noble wife, who feared the consequences which ensued, he gave the clerk a wonderful treasure, which he kept always in a strong place, saying that on a certain day he would be able to redeem it, and pay the whole sum. This desirable treasure was composed in likeness of a beautiful collar or brooch, which had been made by St. Eligius, the venerable bishop, so admirable for his holiness, and virtue, and skill in every curious art, and it was for the use of Lothaire, king of the French. The stone was a beryl, and it contained an exquisite carving of Susanna accused by the old judges,

> "Egregiæ gentis Rex Anglicus hunc dedit illi,
> Quem fore speravit gratum dans plurima gratis,
> Inter quæ dantis prosit sibi portio talis."

To be brief. The appointed day arrived in which the count was to redeem his pledge, but the other declared himself ignorant of any such agreement, and that he had never so understood the count. Grievously vexed, and full of anger and sorrow, the count returned home, and collected a multitude of his neighbours, and exposed the execrable machination of the seller, and asked their advice as to how he should proceed to avert this misfortune, which would be an irreparable loss to him. By general consent there was made an assembly of all his brothers, and friends, and knights, and a crowd of armed people, and they moved hastily to the city of Rheims, and besieged it, and took it; and having set spies, they discovered the said clerk flying to the greater church, which they surrounded, and not finding him within, they set fire to the whole place, upon which the criminal issued forth, and then he was seized, and the treasure was found in his breast, and so it was restored to the count. News of this event reaching the king's ears, the court immediately was highly indignant, and a large army, commanded by the king in person, marched to revenge this execrable outrage; but after a desperate battle, the king's force was defeated, and the king

Charles himself taken prisoner by Count Eilbert, and loaded with chains for many days, till at length mutual pledges of peace being given, the king was delivered, and with great honours, as became the royal dignity, escorted to his home, and that desirable treasure remained for ever after inviolably with Count Eilbert. However, divine love afterwards distinguished this count; so that partly through compunction for this sacrilege, and because he had formerly built seven castles, in order that he might remedy these structures of malediction by the antidote of blessing, he resolved to found seven churches. and this was the origin of the monastery of Vasor in the year 944. It was built in the midst of a forest, which was uninhabited, excepting that the house of the count was concealed in it. To prepare for building this church, he had the wood cut down which surrounded his house, and the place rendered agreeable and wholesome. Then close to his house he constructed the church, with useful habitations for the monks; and after three years the monastery was finished, the church was dedicated to St. Patrick, and the count gave to it his feudal inheritance. Then that famous treasure, which was the cause of all the sedition and controversy, was given by him to the monks, whom he charged to keep it safely for ever. And at the end of twenty-three years, archbishop Forannan, from the parts of Ireland by angelic order leaving his native soil, came with twelve companions to this valley, and the count met him, and conducted him to the monastery with great honour; and the count procured that the man of God should be made abbot; and the king having investigated his sanctity, commended himself to his prayers, and gave his abbey an exemption from royal decrees: and the man of God named the place Vallem-decoram, which became Valciodorum, and thence Vasor *.

I have said that other monasteries owed their origin to grief, and of these we might also give many instances. At Tagernsee, in Bavaria, the Benedictine abbey was founded by two brothers, princely warriors, Adalbert and Ottokar, in the reign of Pepin. Afflicted with a domestic calamity, they renounced the world, and founded this

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* Chronic. Abbat. S. Trudonis, liv. 1, ap. Dacher. Spicileg. vii. 366.

house, which, in the eleventh century, contained two hundred monks, who lived in great unity and peace[*]. Tassilo, duke of Bavaria, founded the abbey of Kremsmunster, in the year 787, in a forest where his only son had been slain by a wild boar, which he was hunting: so the father, having lost his heir, made Christ his heir, and provided in it for monks of the order of St. Benedict[†].

In 1134, there was, in that part of Westphalia which adjoins the archbishopric of Cologne, a castle called Wolmundstein, inhabited by noblemen who possessed all the surrounding country, and were called the lords of Wolmundstein. One of these, Gerwick by name, a bold and generous youth, set out to visit the halls of the most celebrated princes, in order to seek the friendship of the most excellent men, and to see both the cities and manners of different people. Arriving in Bavaria, he met there with a youth bold and generous like himself, the young Theobald, Marquis of Vohenburg, on the Danube, which is a castle half-way between Ingolstadt and Ratisbon, with whom he soon formed a close friendship. When this marquis saw that the manners and knightly spirit of the stranger agreed with his own, though married and having children, yet, through desire of seeing strange countries, he exchanged right hands with Gerwick, and the two youths swore an indissoluble friendship. Soon after, they set out together, with one heart, to visit the courts of all princes, to assist at the tournaments which were held, and to make trial of their fortitude and valour. It happened, at one of these solemnities, that the two friends coming into collision, and rushing against each other with all their strength, Gerwick happened to strike Theobald such a terrible blow, that, breaking his helmet, he beheld the red drops flowing from the almost deadly wound which he had inflicted on his friend. Gerwick, grievously moved at this event, resolved in future to renounce chivalry, and to go into voluntary exile, abandoning for ever all the pomps and pleasures of the world. The wounded marquis, after a short space, began to think of his wife and children, and to hear the voice of God as if present,—so true is the word of Isaiah, that "vexation gives intelligence." So the two friends separated. Gerwick, having disposed the affairs of his house, renounced the world, and became a monk at Sigeberg, not far from Cologne; and the marquis, being moved by his calamity, since he could not renounce the world as his friend had done, yet, in order to promote the work of God, deemed it his duty to found an abbey, which he accordingly did, on the river Regen, some miles from Ratisbon, which is called by the people the abbey of Reichenbach, conspicuous at present for the beauty of its buildings and the fervour of its religion. After some years, Gerwick, on account of his singular urbanity and gentleness, having the charge of receiving strangers in his abbey of Sigeberg, it happened that the Lord Chuno, the elect bishop of Ratisbon, returning from the university of Paris, was received there to hospitality, and was so much struck with his modesty and virtue, that he persuaded the abbot to permit him to accompany him to Ratisbon: thus was he compelled by obedience to go with the bishop. After his arrival, having obtained the bishop's permission, he began to look about for a proper place to construct a monastery; and, penetrating into a thick wood, alone pervious to hunters, at a spot which the people now call Kolergrun, having cut down some trees, he and his companions began to build a small house, when, lo! the Marquis Theobald came out from his castle of Egra to hunt, and seeing his trees cut, and a house erected, in that retreat of wild beasts, he became furious, and asked who had dared to do this. The brethren, in trembling, began to relate their intention; and Gerwick presented himself, and gave the story of his life. So when the prince heard him, discovering that this stranger was the noble youth of Wolmundstein once so close to him in friendship, he sprang from his horse in a transport of joy, and embraced him, showing him the scar of the wound he had given him, and bidding him be of good courage, for that he would assist him in his design. So he gave him as much of the wood as was necessary; and then stones were brought; and, finding a little fishy brook,—the Vanderbrun,—they built the monastery on its banks; and there these lovers of the desert and solitude sat down, and thence the place was called Waldsassen, or the place of sitting in the woods. St. Bernard supplied them with monks from Cisteaux.

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[*] Jaeck Gallerie der Klöster Deutchlands, 1.

[†] Senat. Dialog. Historic. Martini Abbatis Scotorum Viennæ ap. Pez. Script. Rer. Aust.

At this time, Adelheydin, daughter of Theobald by his first wife, the Lady Adelheyde, duchess of Poland, was married to the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa, in the town of Egra, in presence of many ecclesiastical and secular princes of Germany; and, the marriage being celebrated, the emperor came with all his train to assist at the consecration of the church of the new abbey, by Chuno, bishop of Ratisbon*.

Some monasteries owed their origin to a sudden inspiration arising from events that seemed fortuitous and trivial: as when a stag being pursued by the king's hounds through a desert in Provence, and having taken refuge in the cave of St. Ægidius, a holy hermit, the king was moved to construct a monastery over the cave. It was while taking a repast under the boughs, after hunting in the forests on the Mount Castellio, that Count Wolfandus was moved to select a spot for the site of a foundation, which he had vowed to make when on a pilgrimage some time before to Mount Garganus, in Apulia. The origin of the abbey of Bonport, near the Pont de l'Arche, three leagues from Rouen, in the diocese of Evreux, was a hunting adventure. Richard I., king of England, while hunting a stag, was carried by his impetuous horse so far into the Seine, that he was in danger of perishing; and in that moment, while in the midst of the water, he made a vow to God to build an abbey on whatever spot his horse would first make land. This vow he fulfilled in 1190, and he endowed the abbey with noble fiefs and baronies†.

But, leaving instances of this kind, let us take a few examples of the last and most ordinary source from which monasteries arose, which was simply the peaceful inspiration of a devout heart; and we shall find that, even when they had no other origin but sanctity, or conversion to it, there were often circumstances which imparted a no less lively interest to the first pages of their history.

St. Bernard, when in Brabant, for the sake of preaching, had promised to send some monks to establish a convent in that country. Accordingly, on his return to Clairvaux, he selected twelve monks, with another for their abbot, and five novices, and, giving them his blessing, dismissed them. After the octaves of Easter, these men, going out of Clairvaux, descended the valley. Upon reaching the country of Brabant, the first night they were lodged in a private house, with an honest man who had no heir. After supper, having sung complins, the abbot and his monks retired to bed in profound silence; and, after some rest, rising up, they chanted vigils in their austere tone: which these men with whom they were lodged hearing, they were filled with compunction for their sins, and gave themselves up into their hands, and that place is called Seingontrahun to this day. Then they continued their journey, and at length rested at the fountain of Goddiarch,—and in these times all that region was uncultivated, and covered with forests,—there they built a monastery, in the second year of the pontificate of pope Eugene III., and in the fourth of the reign of Godfrey III., duke of Brabant *.

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* Notitiæ Abbat. Ord. Cisterciens. per univ. Orbem, lib. iii. 5.

† Hist. of Evreux, 161.

The abbey of Maceirada, in the diocese of Coimbra, owed its origin to Albarac, the Saracen. This Mahometan and warrior, from being a most bitter enemy of the Church, became a pious Christian, and an humble anachorite. In the year 1139, he withdrew into that vast solitude, where he constructed an oratory, and finally assumed the Benedictine habit, with a few brethren, whose cells became the monastery on which Alphonso I., king of Portugal, conferred so many privileges †.

In 1118, Gundramnus, a buffoon, renouncing earthly vanities, chose to lead an eremitical life in the wood of Public-Mount; and, because the place was dangerous, in order to exercise hospitality he laid the foundations of a church and convent, and the bear which he used to lead about drew the stones for it. The people of Liege flocked to admire the bear drawing the stones; and some of them, divinely struck, left the world, and began to lead a regular life here. The place was consecrated under the invocation of St. Giles; and Peter of Liege was the first prior ‡.

In the forest of Aronaise, there was a spot called the Trunk of Berenger, deriving its name from the trunk of a tree, in which was supposed to be the dead body of

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* Historia Monast. Villariensis, lib. i. ap. Martene, Thesaur. Anecd. iii.

† Notit. Abb. Ord. Cister. lib. vi. 34.

‡ Hist. Monast. St. Laurent. Leodiens. ap. Martene, Vet. Script. lib. iv. p. 1081.

Berenger, a famous robber, who had long infested the forest, which tree the robbers who succeeded him used to pretend to consult, in order to know what ransom they should require from their prisoners. The monastery which was built on this spot, in the eleventh century, owed its origin to the blessed Heldemare, who, in 1099, after leading an eremetical life with two others in that forest, founded it there *.

Let us hear now a very ancient document connected with the history of the Black Forest. "There was a certain noble widow, named Helisena, of the Calba, who, finding that God had refused to give her an heir, besought him fervently to make known to her in what manner she could employ her possessions so as to glorify his name most. One night she heard a voice in a dream, saying, 'Helisena, God hath heard your prayer: lo! examine this plain, on which are three pine trees lying across one trunk; on that spot build a church, in which the name of God may be honoured, and his worship observed.' The dream was so distinct, that it was as if she had seen the spot. In the morning, putting on a silk robe, as in festal attire, in honour of God, and taking with her a maiden and two servants, she walked forth as if to enjoy the sweet air; and after ascending a certain mountain, she found a plain on the top of it, to which three pines, lying across one trunk, gave a certain sylvan beauty. She burst into tears at the sight, and, taking off part of her silken attire, placed it on the ground near the pines, to denote that she took possession of the spot for the praise and honour of God; and then, returning home to her family, she called together all her friends, with Evrard and Leupold, noble servants, who then governed the town of Calba, and also the first magistrate, and made known to them her intention, and asked if they would give her possession of the ground for ever; and they said that they would give her not only the ground, but also the trees, and all the fields adjoining. Then Helisena laid aside her silken robe, her ring, and her jewels, and placed them in the chapel of St. Nicholas, promising that thenceforth she would wear them no more; and in three years the church was finished, and she built a convent adjoining it for four persons, who should serve it, abstracted from

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* Longueval. Hist. de l'Eglise Gal. viii. 118.

the world, and having sufficient maintenance, that they might praise God there continually. To this church soon flowed a vast multitude daily; and then, after the completion of these things, the noble widow died, and was buried at Tubingen, and I. Bruno, the notary of Evrard and Leupold, was present at this act, in the year 645 *.

This chapel of St. Nazarius, on the top of the mountain, gave rise to the monastery of Hirschau, when Count Erlafrid, in the ninth century, brought to it the body of St. Aurelius from Italy. Trithemius did not know this story, which was first discovered in the archives of Spires, in 1534. The history of the second foundation of this celebrated abbey involves some interesting details, which are thus related:—In 1050, pope St. Leo IX., at the prayer of the emperor Henry, coming into Germany, to hold councils, and establish peace, turned aside from his road a little to visit his nephew Adelbert, Count of Calba, lineal descendant of the Count Erlafrid, who had founded the monastery of St. Aurelius at Hirschau, and his devout wife Wiltrude; for the count's mother, daughter of the Count of Egisheim, was the pope's sister. On arriving at his castle of Calba, lest he should seem to enter his nephew's house with empty hands, he delivered, according to his custom, words of holy preaching, and laboured to raise the minds of all to the love of God. Next day the pontiff and count went forth to take a walk of recreation, and on arriving at the summit of a certain hill, they sat down, when the pope said, "This spot, dear nephew, surrounded with mountains, refreshed with streams, and yielding the solitude of woods, seems well adapted for a habitation of servants of God who might adore him day and night. Truly it is a pity if there should not be a house of religion in this whole solitude." To whom Adelbert replied, "Holy father, in sooth, there was hard-by in days of yore such a house, founded by one of my ancestors, as I have often heard my father say, of which the monks long persevered in great sanctity, but at length miserably declining from the fervour of holy religion, and losing all spiritual goods, and being often admonished by my grandfather, they despised his salutary counsels, and hardened their hearts, till at length, God so ordaining, in

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* Gerberti Historia Nigræ Silvæ, tom. i. 46.

order to take away the scandal, their temporal goods were wasted, so that all either died, or moved elsewhere in quest of better living, and none were left." At hearing this the pope groaned, and said, "Who now possesses the goods of that monastery?" The count answered, that he could not tell, as he never knew what they had been. Then the pope understood the mystery, but said nothing. Afterwards he went alone secretly to the spot designated, and found there an old clerk, Bertold, who told him that he had known the holy monks, who all persevered to the end in a devout life, and then, under oath of secrecy, he revealed the fact, which was, that Count Adelbert's grandfather had destroyed the monastery through avarice. The pope then set labourers to work, who discovered the body of the saint, and then, on pain of refusing absolution, he obliged the count to restore the property, and the monastery was rebuilt and entered upon in 1066 *.

The origin of the monastery of Windberg is thus related by its founder in a charter written in 1167. "Be it known to all the faithful, present and future, that I, Wintth, built a church in the place which has its name from me; for I came from Saxony to the said place, being the first who inhabited it, and hence it is called from me Windberg; for I slept in the said place, and I saw in a dream an eagle flying, and with the flap of its wings the earth was shaken; and it came to me and touched me with its plumes, saying, Rise up, and go to the great river, and you will meet travellers, and ask of them which of their number is called Wintth: he will be your co-operator. I did as it ordered, for I asked him first from what land and family he was sprung; and he answered, that he came from Saxony with the army of king Lewis, adding, that the Huns had led him away: and further I asked, Who is your mother? and he replied, My mother was called Sophia. Then rushing on his neck, I embraced him, weeping for joy, for I knew from the relation of my mother that he was my brother; for I was born after he had been carried off from us, and I had the same name, because of the love which my mother bore to him. Then I opened my heart to him, and disclosed my intention of building a monastery in

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* Trithem. in Chronic. Hirsaugiensis.

honour of our Lord Jesus Christ, and of the blessed Virgin Mary, and of all the saints: and by our sinful hands the relics of saints were carried to it, and enclosed within an altar in presence of Azeline the priest *."

It would be long to tell of the religious houses which owed their origin merely to the piety of devout Christians, moved at the peaceful seclusion of particular spots, as when Ela, Countess of Salisbury, widow of William Longsword, built a monastery for Carthusians in her park at Henton in Somersetshire †, and Gauthier, Count of Brienne, founded, in 1143, the abbey of Basse-Fontaine, on the skirts of the wood of Brienne, near a beautiful fountain, which he had remarked while hunting. He, in consequence, invited the monks of Beaulieu thither, as being a part of the forest nearer to him than Beaulieu; and besides constructing the monastery, he made them add a chapel towards the north of these woods, where he might hear mass before going to hunt. In conclusion we may remark, that these pious men, in fixing upon the site for their religious foundations, were very often unconsciously determining that of towns and cities, which were the final result, so that they might have used the words of Virgil with as much truth in regard to the first as to the second part of the line,

> "Hic locus urbis erit, requies ea certa laborum."

Raban Maur, when increasing the number of cells round Fulda, which he built on different farms and at various oratories, supplying them with monks from the abbey, was thus founding towns which derived their names from his religious foundation. Abracell was called from Abraham, a monk of Fulda, Arzell from the monk Aezzo, Edelcell from Edeling, who lived under the abbot Egbert in 1049, Kerzell from Kero in the tenth century, Aichezell from Haicho of Fulda, Henzell from Haking of the same abbey in 826, Mackenzell from Matto in the ninth century, Sarkewzell from Salugo in 770, and so elsewhere ‡. In the eighth century Malines was only a collection of some poor huts round a monas-

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* Relatio de Origine Monast. Windbergensis, ap. Canisii Lectiones Antiq. tom. iii.

† Tanner, Notitia Monastica.

‡ Schannat. Historia Fuldensis, P. i.

tery which had been built where St. Rombaud suffered martyrdom in 775. The origin of Ghent is traced to two monasteries which had been formed by St. Amand in the seventh century, out of two castles; that of Dunkerque to a priory in the Dunes, built by St. Eloy, round which some fishermen raised a few cabins. The town of St. Claudio in Gallicia grew out of some houses built for the servants of the Cistercian Abbey there, to which they paid every year a fowl in token of its right. At St. Germain there was first a monastery in a forest; then arose a castle, which became a royal residence, and lastly a town was the result. There is no mention of Pacta in Sicily, surnamed the magnanimous city, before the year 1094, when count Roger I. built there a noble monastery, and associated it to another which is at Lipara *. Similarly the wooden cell and chapel erected by St. Columban at Bobbio, on the river Trevia, which Arlulphus rebuilt with stone, gave rise to a town which St. Henry, the emperor, raised to an episcopal city †. But here break we off; for lo we are arrived

> "Avete solitudinis,
> Claustrique mites incolæ ‡."

CHAPTER VI.

> "Quisque domum nostram veniens intrabis amicus
> Ante tuos oculos aspice signa crucis."

Such characters over the portal's arch were read inscribed of the monastery of St. Peter, at Salzburg, in the ninth century §. "Christus nobiscum," are the words which first meet the eye on entering the cloister of St. Dominic, at Bologna. Pierced hands with arms crossed and supporting a cross are the brief affecting symbol over the door of many cloisters, to express what

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* Sicilia Sacra, ii. 770.

† Italia Sacra, iv. 925.

‡ First lines of the hymn for vespers on the feast of all the saints of the Benedictine order, 13th Novemb.

§ Germania Sacra, ii. 118.

is uppermost in the thoughts of those who dwell within them. In the porch of the Capuchin Convent, on the mountain which rises over Turin, I saw inscribed "A sonnet on the love of Jesus Christ." Over a convent gate in Alessandria I read these words, "Adducam eos in montem sanctum meum, et lætificabo eos in domo orationis meæ." But the gates of the house of peace, to which you often mount by a steep or woody track which shows on each side the stages of Christ's passion, have a voice even without inscriptions. How many thoughts spring up at the sight of one of these pacific fortresses, which have calmed so many passions, and protected so many lives! Who is not moved at the sight of that portal of St. Denis, "monument of liberty," as a French historian styles it, having been erected with the 200 livres given to the Lord Abbot Suger, by the people for their exemption,—or on arriving at that small humble wicket of the Capuchins, at which a wooden cross receives the hand that is to sound the bell, so worn and polished by the poor man's hand, (for the rich seldom pass this threshold,)—or at beholding that curious old archway turreted in the ivy-mantled lonely wall, shaded by tall solemn trees, like that which leads to the ruined priory of Dover, or to the Abbey of St. Martin d'Auchy on the confines of Normandy and Amboise? These seats for the poor, that window for the dole import no hard meaning. But let us enter, and suppose, as the poet says, that

> "The arched cloisters, far and wide,
> Ring to the warrior's clanking stride."

It enters into the heroic character to admire the beauty of the monastic buildings, and to examine with awe and inquisitive attention the grandeur of their stately wind-braving towers. Homer represents Telemachus and his companions as filled with astonishment at the magnificence of the house of Menelaus. Their first care is to explore it, nor is it till they have delighted their eyes with seeing all its treasures that they accept food and drink. No pilgrim of the same mould at Cluny or at Clairvaux would shrink from indulging in such curiosity, or, after viewing all, would be ashamed to express the like amaze, and cry out *σέβας μ' ἔχει εἰσορόωντα.*

"Architects are melancholy," says Cardan*. He had in view no doubt the immense and solemn structures of the monks, which in fact indicate the prevalence of grave, albeit of those versatile and ingenious minds, of which the expression might be St. Augustin's words, alluding to a future life, "in ea spe gaudeo quando sanè gaudeo;" for all their parts are made to announce or recommend that path of noble love, by following which, as Michael Angelo says, "we shall pass without danger through the narrow and fearful valley of the grave, beyond which is the only hope of felicity." The monks, indeed, if we admit Cardan's principle, were inclined to melancholy, not alone in their capacity of architects, but also in consequence of their genius as painters; for "painting," he adds, "weaving tapestry, and generally all employments in the arts make men melancholy." Behold the religious houses which date from ages of faith, walk round their courts and cloisters and gardens, and you will find that the very walls viewed from without or from within dispose the mind to a kind of solemn peace, and the gravity of devout contemplation, reviving dreams treasured up from early days, the holy and the tender. Many of them, connected as they are with the lives of holy men, had so divine a character that one may say in the words of Leander Albertus, speaking of Loretto, "Besides the most weighty testimony to prove the truth of the record or tradition respecting them, there is no one so hard of heart or so wicked but on entering is softened and moved to honour the place, by a certain celestial power and instinct, and to pray for pardon of his sins to Jesus Christ†." "I shall only mention one thing as to my travels," says St. Charles Borromeo, writing to his cousin the Cardinal-Prince of Hohen-Embs, in 1576, "I have visited Einsiedelin, which is two days' journey from mount St. Gothard, and after the house of the holy family I do not know a spot where my soul has been more inflamed with pious ardour than there." In the greater monastery at Milan were two ancient towers, beneath one of which was the prison in which the holy martyrs Gervase, Protasius, Victor, Nabor, Felix, and others were confined, relative to whom some old paintings are still discernible. Even when such influence is wanting, "say, does aught meet your view more fit to animate the poet's pen, aught that more surely by its aspect fills pure minds with sinless envy, than the abode of the good monks, who, faithful through all hours to their high charge, and truly serving God, have yet hearts and hands for trees and flowers, enjoy the walks their predecessors trod, nor covet lineal rights in lands and towers?" Hence the poet wishes that he

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* Hier. Card. De Utilitate ex Advers. Cap. lib. iii. c. 4.

† Descript. Italiæ, 428.

"———— may never fail
To walk the studious cloister's pale,
And love the high-embowed roof,
With antique pillars, massy roof."

"The buildings of the monks in the middle ages appear at present," says a French writer, "to have been sufficient for the relief of a population ten times greater than it was." We have already seen how they were spread over every country. Now let us remark their immensity. The buildings of Cluny were so extensive that five or six princes might have been lodged there with all their retinue. During the council of Constance, the pope, the emperor, and the king of France, with their respective courts, to the number of more than 200 persons, lodged there without causing any of the monks to be displaced. The church commenced by St. Hugues VI. at the expense of Alphonso VI. king of Castile, his intimate friend, was the grandest in the world after St. Peter's at Rome. The church of the Abbey of Vezelay surpassed in length that of Notre-Dame, at Paris. In the sumptuous Abbey of Corby, in Saxony, Martene says that three princes with their suites can be lodged without inconvenience. The portal built in the time of St. Adalard still existed. Adjoining the Chartreuse of Bourg-Fontaine, in the forest of Villers-Cotterêt, was a palace built by the founder Charles de Valois, king of France, which had a tribune opening into the church, where he could assist at the divine offices: but he would suffer no one of the court to enter the cloister. At the vast convent of the Escurial, when the king arrives, the monks retire to the west and south fronts, yielding up the principal cells to the royal family, and no inconvenience ensues to them. The Abbey of St. Medard, at Soissons, was a town in itself. Besides its great basilica of the Trinity and that of St. Sophia, there were within the walls four other churches; and this was not unusual; for as early as the sixth century there were sometimes many churches in one monastery, as Mabillon remarks. There were besides, at St. Medard's, the royal palace for the emperor, and the abbatial palace, the cloisters of its 400 monks, and buildings to lodge the guests and servants of the abbey, which alone were immense, as were also the constructions for the school, and for the different offices, all which were crowned with vast towers. At the Abbey of Stavelot, in the forest of Ardenne, the tower rose to an elevation of 300 feet. When the Abbey of St. Gall was burnt down in 1314, with its churches and chapels, thirty bells were melted*. The greatest and most harmonious bell in all England was that called Guthlac, in the Abbey of Crowland†. What must it have been to hear its swelling tones across the vast watery desert which surrounds that abbey? The prodigious substructions of these edifices from the tenth and eleventh centuries are now an astonishment. We learn from Giraldus Cambrensis, that the stones used in the foundation of Peterborough Abbey Church were so large that eight oxen could scarcely move one of them. Hence we may form some idea of the solidity of these buildings. The walls of the Cork Convent at Cintra, composed of vast stones, of seven or eight hundred tons weight each, seem as if the work of nature. Even in the poorest monasteries the best materials were employed. Lupus, abbot of Ferrers, writes to Ædilculf, king of the English, to beg assistance from him in a time of distress, as he is about to cover his church with lead‡. The Abbey of Luxeuil, though much diminished in extent when Dom Martene visited it in 1708, was still immense and had two churches enclosed§. That of Solignac, in the Limousin, founded by St. Eloy, was in the form of a circle. "There are so many remarkable things," says this Father, "in the Abbey of Clairvaux, that one always finds in it something new each time one visits it. We saw the ancient manufactories of the lay brothers and the tanneries, which are admirable." This partly explains the prodigious extent of many monasteries, which were constructed so as to contain every thing necessary within their walls. Thus "many hundred persons were attached in various capacities to the Abbey of St. Gall, some of whom lived within it, familia intus, as artisans, millers, bakers, smiths, carpenters, glass-blowers, brewers, shepherds, swineherds, boat-builders, and men who transported the goods of the abbey across the Lake of Constance: others lived without the abbey, familia foris, young men and maidens, who assisted by day at different works, being bound in compensation for rent by their parents' obligation to repair to the abbey court or to its nearest farmyard three days every week and give their labour *." "From the year 820 to 920 St. Gall," says its historian, "was a well-inhabited house. Besides 105 monks and 200 converse brethren, there were many students and beneficed persons who resided within it. The provisions for feeding such a community were commensurate. There was an oven in which a thousand loaves were baked at a time. For making beer there was a malt-kiln for 100 measures of barley. There were so many mills, that every year ten new mill-stones were required to put in place of those that were past use. There was a botanical garden also, to furnish medicines for the sick, and a hostel for travellers, which was built within the walls. The abbey was surrounded with workshops, hostelry buildings, and stabling. The circuit filled the whole valley from one hill to the other, so that not only the houses which the settlers had built for themselves, but also St. Mangen's Church stood within the enclosures of the abbey †." At St. Riquier, the garden adjoins the south side of the abbey. It is very extensive and surrounded with a wall sixty feet high, and so thick that there is a walk on the summit. The fruit-trees all date from the time of the monks. One pear-tree, the wonder of the whole country, is said to be 200 or 300 years old. The vast stem is quite flattened to the wall, and its branches spread out like a fan to a prodigious extent on every side. The gardener told me it is always loaded with the finest fruit, with which indeed the whole ground was then strewed. Nothing can be more picturesque than the view, from this

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* Ildefons Von Arx, ii. 9.

† Hist. Ingulphi.

‡ Lupi Epist. 13.

§ Voyage Lit.

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* Ildefons. Von Arx. Geschichte der S. Gallen, i. 55.

† Ib. i. 128.

garden, of the long corridors and ruined cloisters, still profusely adorned with images of saints. In most monasteries all the offices were within the walls; for the monks performed every thing for themselves. St. Benedict and the synod of Aix-la-Chapelle, in 817, require expressly that the bake-house should be within them. The bread in the ancient monasteries was baked twice, and often kept so long that it was necessary to break and pulverize it with a mallet*. The Carthusians in Paris, and the monks of the abbey of St. Martin-des-Champs, had contrivances for grinding corn and making better bread, which excited great attention. In 817 it was also required that there should be an enclosure set apart for culinary herbs, in the sowing of which we may remark the monks observed no lunar superstitions, though Le Grand d'Aussy says that such preliminaries were prescribed by common cultivators as indispensable†. Among the officers of the monastery of Bobbio, in the year 835, we find cited "the master carpenter, the keeper of the vineyards, the keeper of the orchard‡. The swineherd of the abbey was another Eumæus; and Homer does not disdain to tell us how many swine he had to look after: though he does not add what so many convertites in the middle ages learned from experience, that his occupation was a toilsome one; for as John de Brie found when he had to drive them to the fields and forests, and back again in the evening, 'ce sont de rudes bestes et de maulvaise discipline,' and often he did not know whether he had not lost some of them, so that the task was grievous and almost intolerable to him§." Some of the ἔθνεα χοίρων, then, as Homer calls them, were generally found at the monastery, where their presence was very necessary; for pork was used in dressing vegetables by the most austere communities||. Ducange cites an ancient inventory of the abbey of St. Remy at Rheims, stating that it possessed 415 swine. There is a letter of Mappinius, archbishop of Rheims, to Villicus, bishop of Metz, in the

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* Le Grand d'Aussy, Hist. de la Vie privée des François I. 102.

† Id. i. 196.

‡ Murat. Antiq. It. lxv.

§ Le Vray Régime des Bergers, i.

|| Le Grand d'Aussy, i. 310.

sixth century, solely written to ask the price of swine. These were often a royal donation to monasteries. There are many charters in which the French kings permit certain abbeys to feed their swine in the royal forests. The council of Paris in 1092 authorized the monks of Compiegne to send their swine into that forest, and forbad any seigneur to ask a tax in compensation. Roger, Earl of Shrewsbury, gives to the monks of Ouches for ever the right of pasture for their swine, in all his forests. The annals of Corby in Saxony do not disdain to notice that in 905 there was a dysentery among the swine, which destroyed nearly all of them; and the annals of Ulster record as the first achievement of the Danes in Ireland, the drowning of all the swine belonging to the abbot of Rechran. Lodging for the herdsman and his flocks added therefore to the mass of buildings round the cloister. At the abbey of Froidmont, three leagues from Beauvais, the hundred lay-brothers attended so much to this branch of industry, that in the one year of 1230 they sold 7000 fleeces *.

In abbeys must be sought the origin of the Artesian wells †. St. Bernard's well, in the abbey of Clairmarais, dug in 1172, is one of the deepest in France. The most ancient known, which dates from 1126, is in the Carthusian monastery at Lillers. But leaving the lower courts, let us repair to the main buildings. These were not carelessly constructed in a day, like modern works. We learn from Orderic Vitalis that eighty years were spent in building the noble abbey of St. Ouen at Rouen ‡. In 1306 Marguerite, second wife of Edward I., and sister of Philip, king of France, began to build the choir of the Franciscan church in London, but died before completing it and was buried there. The nave of the church was begun by John de Briten, Earl of Richmond, and completed by Margaret, Countess of Pembroke, Gilbert Clare, Earl of Gloucester, and his two sisters, Helena de Spencer, and Elizabeth de Burgh. Twenty years elapsed before the church was finished §. In general the monks were their own architects. All the magnificent buildings of the abbey of St. Gall, in the ninth century, were con-

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* Voyage Lit. de deux Bén.

† Annuaire des Longitudes, 1835.

‡ Hist. lib. xiii.

§ Wadding, An. Min. tom. vi.

structed by the monks themselves. Tutilo, the learned philosopher, the painter and musician, was above all eminent for his skill in the art of building. Isenrich, who was also a priest, was an excellent carpenter, and Ratger equally serviceable as a stone-cutter. One of their contemporaries observes, that "men can judge of their ability by looking at the church and monastery." "Clearly it appears," he says, "from the nest what kind of birds inhabit it. View the Basilica and the cloister of the monastery, and you will not wonder at what I relate *." The church was begun in 830, and finished in five years. The present edifice of the Grande Chartreuse was built by Dom Masson, prior of the order, and another monk, who was the architect. It is related as a circumstance attending the building of the vast church of the abbey of St. John-des-Vignes at Soissons, that when the two towers were completed, both of them masterpieces of Gothic architecture for lightness and durability, the abbot, Nicolas Prudhomme, mounted to the summit in order to place the cross on the spire with his own hands, which was at an elevation of 234 feet †. When Herluin, the founder of Bec, of Danish race, who had been a renowned knight and favourite of duke Robert, and moved, at the age of thirty-seven, to renounce the world, was building the abbey of Bonneville, William of Jumiège says, "that he worked at it himself like a common labourer, carrying the stones, sand, and lime, on his shoulders. The more delicate he had once been in his proud vanity, the more humble was he now and patient to support all kinds of fatigue for the love of God ‡." When Radeboton, son of the Count of Altenbourg, proposed to build the abbey of Muri, he applied to Embrice, abbot of Einsiedlen, for an architect, who sent him Reginbold and some other monks §. The monks were, however, often assisted in these works by the confraternity of builders, which some suppose was first established at Chartres. When a deputation from it arrived, it was a wondrous spectacle, we are told, to see knights and barons tied to carts, and in a spirit of penance drawing lime, wood, and stones. Haimon, abbot

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* Epist. Ermenrici in Analectis Mabill.

† Hist. de Soissons, ii. 355.

‡ Lib. vi. 9.

§ Chronique d'Einsidlen, 17.

of St. Pierre-de-Dives in Normandy, in a letter to the monks of a convent in England, in 1145, describes the zeal with which rich and powerful nobles undertook to transport the materials like common labourers. He adds, "that during the night tapers used to be fastened on the carts, and that men used to watch, chanting hymns and canticles." Many of these societies were formed into one at Strasbourg, in 1450, by Dotzinger, architect of the cathedral. There was a general assembly of these lodges at Ratisbonn in 1459, where rules were made for the admission of apprentices, companions, and masters, and secret signs were adopted for mutual recognition. This association was confirmed by the German emperors.

Nothing evinces more remarkably the spirit of these ages than the custom of the nobility residing in fortified castles and the monks in cloisters, of which the gates stood open, defended only by faith. However, this order was not wholly uniform, and one may be occasionally surprised on finding some monasteries, even in desert places, fortified like castles. The old monasteries indeed being built exactly on the plan of a Roman house, which, in the last ages, was always fortified, easily admitted of defence; but a little reflection will soon clear up the difficulty. The fact is so. The abbey of Mount Cassino was fortified with walls and towers by the abbot, Bertharius, through fear of the Saracens *. By a drawbridge you still enter the monastery of Grotta Ferrata, which resembles a castle cresting the wooded hill. Others seem by nature fortified. Thus the abbey of Squillaci is strong by its position, on a lofty crest, surrounded by rocks on all sides, between two rivers which surround it, to which circumstance it owed its preservation from the calamity which befel Calabria in 650, when it was ravaged by the Moors †. The great square tower of the abbey of St. Germain-des-Près, which was built in the time of Charlemagne, contributed to save that house when the monk, Abbon, defended it against the Normans. The abbey of St. Medard at Soissons was fortified with ditches and many towers by Eudes, count of Paris and king of Neustria, through fear of the Danes ‡. In later times Charles V. having declared war against the English

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* Hist. Cassinens. c. 33.

† Italia Sacra, ix. 422.

‡ Hist. de Soissons.

in 1368, obliged Richard, abbot of that monastery, to fortify it with walls, and ditches, and towers, lest the enemy should take possession of it and thence attack Paris *. However, when for the security of the country it was necessary that a monastery should be fortified, the consent of the bishop of the diocese was indispensable †.

These houses of peace, therefore, bore marks of having sustained many perils, many injuries. Perhaps at this moment, as they stand before us, all is stillness round them, and we suppose that their aerial towers and massive walls can have only had to endure for centuries the wasting breeze which has worn the pillar's carving and mouldered in his niche the saint, and rounded with consuming power the pointed angles of each turret; but these abbeys, like veterans, worn and unsubdued through so many ages, tempest-beaten, and shone upon by the pale and humid lustre of the moon throughout the silent night, have suffered from every kind of fierce destructive agency; they have been alternately exposed to the hostile rage of Saracens and Danes, of Huns and Normans, of Protestants and the Blackbands, of the Jacobins and Constitutionalists of the present day. In France, during ages of faith, they were often pillaged and burnt by the Normans; in England and Ireland by the Danes; in Spain by the Moors; in Germany by the Huns; in Italy by the Langobards, Saracens, and Huns; in Sicily by the Saracens, whose cruelties to the monks there are related in the affecting letter of the Benedictins of the monastery of St. Placidus at Messana to pope Vitelianus in the year 669, as given by Leo of Ostia ‡. The abbey of Mount Cassino was pillaged by the Lombards in 589 and burnt by the Saracens in 884. The abbey of St. Sylvester at Nonantula was burnt by the Huns in 900, and not restored till nine years had elapsed §. "Seven times," says a monk relating the various fortunes of his own monastery, "was this holy place violated by perfidious christians or by pagans. First by christians amidst intestine wars; another time by the Vandals; a third time by the Saracens in 831; a fourth time by the private rapacity of a certain woman in the reign of Pepin,

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* Bouillart, Hist. de l'Abbaye de S. Ger.-des-Prèz.

† Hurter Geschichte, tom. iii. b. ii. 30.

‡ Sicilia Sacra, ii. 379.

§ Notit. Abb. Ord. Cister. vii. 75.

father of Charlemagne ; the fifth time by the Normans, which was desolatio desolationum ; the sixth and seventh times by the Huns *." "When the Danish pirates, under Hastings and Rollo, ravaged Neustria, destroying a great number of remarkable convents, the monks fled to caverns and woods, or escaped to other countries, carrying with them the bones of their fathers and the writings which recorded their lives, as also the charters and title-deeds of their respective churches. It was then that Haspres, near Cambrai, became enriched with the bodies of St. Hugues, of St. Aichadre and Ghent in Flanders, with those of St. Wandrille, St. Ansbert, and St. Vulfran †." "I should fill a volume," says Eckehard IV., alluding to the Huns, "if I were to relate all that our monks suffered from the Saracens. The injury which they did to St. Gall, Pfeffers, and Coire, was immense. We could neither make use of the mountains nor cultivate the plains. They were so bold that they came down from Bärneck on St. Gall, and shot arrows at the procession which was making round the place. Affairs became so desperate, that the abbot Burkard, after his pilgrimage to Rome with the emperor Otho I. in 963, was no longer able to nourish the monks, so that he was obliged to give them permission to provide for themselves as well as they could." In the abbey of Morbac, Dom Martene found the tombs of seven monks, martyrs, who had been massacred by the Huns ‡. Ingulphus is so particular in his account of the massacre at Crowland, when the Danes burst into the church, that he mentions the names of all the persons occupied at that moment in the celebration of mass. Theodore, the lord abbot, himself was celebrating ; brother Elfgetus as deacon, and brother Savinus as sub-deacon, ministered ; and brothers Egelredus and Ulricus were the boys who bore the lights. Eighty-four monks were butchered, some of them past their hundredth year. When the sub-prior Lethwynus was slain in the refectory, brother Tugarius, a child of ten years of age, of the most beautiful countenance and form, seeing his senior thus murdered, entreated the pagans that they would also kill him ; but count Sidrok, moved with compassion, tore off his mo-

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* Chronicon Besuense apud Dacher. Spicileg. tom. i.

† Ord. Vit. lib. vi.

‡ Voyage Lit. 138.

nastic cowl, and giving him a Danish dress ordered him to follow him, and in this way his life was preserved; and he was the only person who escaped. The description which is given of the return of the other monks to the smouldering ruins is most affecting. Then it was that Briestanus, a chanter of the monastery, and a most eloquent poet, wrote among the ashes of Crowland these lines, which begin:

"Quomodo sola sedes dudum regina domorum,
Nobilis Ecclesia, nuper amica Dei!"

The Danes visited twice the sainted island of Iona, and burnt the monastery. Whatever spot was most distinguished by popular reverence, thither these spoilers bent their course. An Irish geographer of that period, describing the desolation, says, "that in many of the smaller islands of the Irish seas not even a hermit was to be found." In fact they thirsted for the blood of monks and the plunder of abbeys. Twice was the monastery of Bangor despoiled by the Danes. On the latter occasion the venerable abbot and 900 monks were massacred in one day. The monastery of the English at Mayo, the holy isle of Iniscathy in the mouth of the Shannon, having the tomb of its patron, St. Senanus, the cells of St. Kevin in the valley of Glendalough, the monastery of the Scelig Isles on the coast of Kerry, all these and many other seats of holiness were constantly made the scenes of ruthless devastation. The cells of the monks on the islets of Lough Ree, the school of Clonard, renowned throughout Europe, and the ancient abbey of Down, the hallowed resting-place of the remains of St. Patrick, were at different times in the ninth century laid desolate. In short, there was not a single monastery of any renown which was not plundered and laid waste by the Danes in the eighth and ninth centuries" "The devoted courage," adds an historian, "of these crowds of confessors, who still returned to the same spot, choosing rather death than to leave the holy place untenanted, presents one of those affecting pictures of quiet heroism with which the history of the church abounds." Hence the poet, describing the abbey of Lindisfarn, makes especial mention of its need of security:

"In Saxon strength that abbey frown'd
With massive arches broad and round,

That rose alternate, row and row,
On ponderous columns, short and low;
On the deep walls the heathen Dane
Had pour'd his impious rage in vain;
And needful was such strength to these,
Exposed to the tempestuous seas,
Scourged by the wind's eternal sway,
Open to rovers fierce as they,
Which could twelve hundred years withstand
Winds, waves, and northern pirates' hand."

No longer then should these towers and battlements astonish us on arriving at the sainted houses of St. Benedict, since we know that their inhabitants might so often have complained, like the people of Rimini of old when Cæsar passed the Rubicon, that they were always sure to behold the first camps and to receive the first shocks of war; and indeed we read expressly that when the Normans besieged Paris, the monks were the principal objects of their fury. Not alone external defences but, to obviate the consequence of surprise, secret chambers also were often necessary within the walls, to provide against sudden visits from the

Ἄγριον αἰχμητὴν, κρατερὸν μήστωρα φόβοιο [*],

for he too figured even among christian hosts in the new capacity of destroyer of monasteries, so analogous to an old Homeric avocation. Understanding now the cause which called for castellated walls, if such there be, let us cast our eyes on other parts, and proceed exploring.

Writers of the middle ages speak with admiration of the architecture of many abbeys. William of Malmesbury says of Tewkesbury, "there is the stately abbey built by Robert son of Hamon, where the beauty of the buildings and the charity of the monks enchants the eyes of those that come there, and soothes their minds. What shall I say," he exclaims, "of Thorney and of the beauty of its buildings, in which this of itself is wonderful, how, among those lakes and marshes, it should rest on solid foundations [†]?" "The sun," says Leland, speaking of St. Alban's, "hath not seen either a city so finely seated or a goodlier abbey, whether a man consider the endowments, or the largeness, or the incomparable magnificence thereof. A man that saw the abbey would say, verily it were a city, so many gates there are in it, and some of brass, so many towers, and a most stately church, upon which attend three others, also standing gloriously in one and the same churchyard, all of passing fine and curious workmanship."

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[*] vi.

[†] Wil. Malm. de Gestis Pontif. Anglorum, lib. iv.

In Anglo-Saxon times the monastery of Hexham exhibited the highest perfection of art. Its stones were finely polished, its walls and columns lofty, and it had spiral stairs to the top of each tower. Eddius, who had been at Rome, where he wrote St. Wilfrid's life, declares that no building on this side of the Alps was equal to it. The superb arched doors of St. Joseph's chapel, and the exquisitely-beautiful tracery still discernible among the shattered walls, attest what was the splendour of the buildings of Glastonbury. In the monastery of St. Bernard, upon the heights without the gates of Salamancha, is a spiral staircase, which only touches at the bottom and the top. It was constructed by a monk of the house of eminent sanctity, and it is so solid that the French and English carried up all their artillery upon it. Charles III. sent architects to examine it, who pronounced its construction to be a work of art exceeding their ingenuity.

The religious orders, however, in the earliest ages, were not ambitious in respect to splendour of buildings. "The ancient monks of our order," says Trithemius, "inhabited humble and dark cells; but their hearts were lucid and splendid with the light of Divine love, and illumined by the knowledge of the Scriptures *:"—a sentence which is continually repeated in monastic writings of a later date †.

The monastery which St. Martin erected in a secret place two miles from the church of Tours, and in which eighty disciples lived with him, was only a wooden building; and, throughout the ages of faith, innumerable religious houses were of the same character. Such was the Augustinian convent in which Luther was professed: the foundations were hardly below the surface of the

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* In Chronic. Hirsaug.

† Annales Novesiens. ap. Martene, Vet. Script. iv. 556.

ground; it had only a wooden altar; the south wall was three feet in height, the rest being formed of old planks. It was a true stable of Bethlehem *.

Even where the greatest magnificence prevailed, there were many traces of the ancient simplicity. Dom Martene, on occasion of his visit to Clairvaux, describes the cell of St. Bernard in that abbey, built for him in his infirmities by Guillaume de Champeaux, bishop of Châlons. "There is no chimney to it," he says, "but under his bed was a great stone with holes through it, under which a brazier used to be kindled without his perceiving it: for he would not have allowed his room to be warmed if he had been aware of their intention. His bed is still here; the room opens on a little chapel, where he used to say mass."

"There has been lately erected in Lombardy a house of our order," says a Carthusian, "so magnificent, that many wonder our order would admit it; but to fly the indignation of princes,—which might easily be excited if any thing were opposed to them,—when they build such houses sumptuously, some indulgence may be made †."

La Marêchale d'Ancre, under the regency of Mary de Medicis, offered to build, at her sole expense, the church for the Carmelites, in the Rue Vaugirard, at Paris, provided they would adopt the plan of an architect which she admired; but these humble men considered the plan too magnificent for their order, and generously refused to accept her offer. God rewarded the exact observance of his servants, and procured them such plentiful alms from the faithful, that in a few years their church was built ‡.

The monasteries of the Capuchins, which were on the same plan in all countries, were always to be constructed like the houses of the poor, of lath and plaster, and uncarved timber; to contain not more than ten or twelve brethren at most, in order that the rule and holy poverty might be observed with more perfection and less impediment, according to the desire of St. Francis §. To these houses the words of St. Jerome might be applied: "In

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* Audin, Vie de Luther, i. 151.

† Petr. Sutorus de Vita Carthusiana, lib. ii. § iii. c. 9.

‡ Dosithée, Vie de S. Jean de la Croix, liv. x.

§ Annales Capucinorum, ad an. 1529.

Christi villa tota rusticitas est." The furniture was to be such as the poor use; and their churches to be so small as not to contain more than fifty persons. The convent itself was to contain only small poor cells, built without art or beauty *. In truth, generally, all that the good monk asked was "a simple dwelling, where he might sit and talk of time and change, as the world ebbs and flows, himself unchanged." When the doge and senate of Venice desired that the Capuchins should serve their newly-erected splendid Church of the Holy Saviour, built on the cessation of the plague, it was necessary to procure a decree from Pope Gregory XIII., authorising them to accept it †. In the fifth and sixth centuries, the monasteries in general were built without much cost. Some uncultivated land, and a small, plain building, with a chapel, satisfied the first wants of men whose great object was to make known the word of God, and to sanctify their own souls by contemplation and labour. When Charles the eighth, abbot of Villers, came in the year 697 to that monastery, he found there nothing but little thatched houses, and, as it were, the huts of shepherds; and he first built there two dormitories of stone, and many offices ‡.

The early monasteries of Ireland and Gaul often resembled those of Egypt in primitive times, of which the cells were but wooden huts, sometimes so low that one could not stand upright in them §. The ancient church of the abbey of Citeaux, consecrated in 1106, in which St. Stephen and St. Alberic were buried, was not more than fifteen feet wide. It had only three windows in the sanctuary, and two in the nave. Similarly, the original church of Cluny was very small. Men did not postpone therefore holy purposes for want of money. St. Columban was not obliged to raise vast subscriptions before going to fix himself in the Vosges. Riches were not wanting to make such foundations. Hear how the first Franciscans that came to England were lodged. "The friar minors," saith Stow, "first arrived in England at Dover, nine in number; five of them remained at Canter-

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* Annales Capucinorum, an. 1528.

† Ibid. ad an. 1578.

‡ Hist. Monasterii Villariens. i. 3. ap. Martene, Thes. Anec. iii.

§ Sulpic. Sever. Dialog. i. 2.

bury, and did then build the first convent of friar minors that ever was in England; the other four came to London, and lodged at the preaching friars the space of fifteen days, and then hired a house in Cornhill of John Travers, one of the sheriffs. They builded there little cells, wherein they inhabited. The devotion of the citizens towards them, and also the multitude of friars so increased, that they were removed by the citizens to a place in St. Nicholas Shambles, which John Iwyn, citizen and mercer of London, appropriated to the use of the said friars, who became himself a lay-brother."

The convents of St. Theresa were placed wherever she could obtain a spot, within four walls. While proposing to commence the reform of the Carmelite order, she set out, in the month of June, to examine a house which had been offered to her for the purpose by Don Raphael Megia Velasquez. She was accompanied by one nun, and Father Julian d'Avila. They lost their way, and no one could direct them to the place, which was called Durvelle; the name being hardly known. The intense heat rendered this the most painful of her journeys. At last, about night-fall, they arrived there, and found it a poor isolated peasant's house, near a stream, wholly unprotected from sun or wind. This place, nevertheless, was sufficient for her purpose, and to supply all that was wanting for her first monastery: she destined the porch for the chapel, the garret for the choir, the chamber for the dormitory, and half of the kitchen, when divided into two parts, for the refectory. Such was the building that served for the celebrated reform of this order. To this house retired Father John de St. Matthias, with one labourer, and they made the alterations she had pointed out, living meanwhile on the alms which people of the neighbouring village gave them. It was in this house that St. John of the Cross made the solemn dedication of himself to the imitation of the sufferings of Jesus, putting on the habit prescribed by St. Theresa, and exhibiting a spectacle to the neighbourhood which astonished and edified all the people. To his poor chapel flocked crowds of devout peasants, who beheld every thing about him with surprise and reverence. St. Theresa speaks of this foundation with rapture. "The poverty of this house," she says, "did not displease the holy Father; but, on the contrary, delighted him. O Lord

God, how little capable are proud buildings and external pleasures to give internal consolation! I conjure you, my sisters, and you, my fathers, to remain always in great detachment with respect to magnificent and sumptuous houses, and to have always before your eyes the founder of our order, who, by poverty and humility, arrived at the eternal enjoyment of the presence of God. In proportion as the body has fewer comforts, the soul receives more joy. What advantage can we derive from great buildings, when one cell must suffice us *?" Nevertheless, the piety of the faithful was seldom satisfied until these poor monasteries were constructed at least on a greater scale. In 1637, this house at Durvelle was converted into a magnificent convent, one of the most commodious in Old Castile. It is a masterpiece of art, without any profane ornaments. The original chapel, so poor in itself, but so precious from the tears which have been shed in it, is preserved in an angle of the cloister.

Such were the humble beginnings of many of the most celebrated abbeys. "Wonder not," says a monastic historian, "you who read this, at the constancy of our fathers, who constructed all the edifices which you behold with the alms of the poor. It was not a king, it was not a count, or any great man, who built this; but it arose amidst poverty and tribulation †."

Kings, however, did often interfere for such purposes. John V., king of Portugal, during a dangerous illness, vowed to erect, upon his recovery, a convent for the use of the poorest priory in the kingdom; and finding, upon inquiry, that this was at Mafra, where twelve Franciscans lived together in a hut, he fulfilled his vow, by erecting there, in 1717, the present magnificent abbey, the Escurial of Portugal, a palace, a convent, and a church of imposing magnitude, in a bleak, solitary country, within view of the sea, ten miles from Cintra.

But let us resume our examination of the monastic buildings. In the vaulted refectory of Clairvaux were two rows of pillars and four rows of tables. The great hall of the monks at Canterbury measured one hundred and fifty feet in length and forty in breadth. The re-

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* P. Dosithée, Vie de S. Jean de la Croix, l.

† Chronic. Morigniacensis Mon. lib. i. ap. Duchesne, tom. iv

fectory of Cluny was thirty-eight paces long and twenty-four broad. There were six tables down the length and three at the extremity, namely, that of the president, which was higher than all the others, that of the greater prior on the right, and that of the claustral prior on the left. The walls were beautifully painted with stories out of the Old and New Testament, and with figures of the princely founders and benefactors of Cluny. There was also an immense image of Christ, and a representation of the last judgment *. The refectory of the great abbey at St. Alban's was adorned with tapestry, and that at Gloucester with portraits of the kings of England in fresco. Generally some devout painting or inscription occupied the refectory walls. In that of the convent of St. Bernard I was struck with a portrait of an old monk stooping over the pages of Boethius. In that of the Carthusian monastery of Calci I saw painted in fresco a queen of France, serving dinner to the monks with her own hands, and under the picture these words, "Ipsa pias regina epulas parat, ipsa ministrat." Over the door of the refectory of the great Dominican convent at Bologna is this inscription, which describes the order to be observed there—

"Ut memor vitæ pie fructor orans ingredere
Ut sobrius audiens intus reficere,
Ut Deo gratus psallens egredere."

The second line refers to the readings which took place during dinner; to which Ives de Chartres alludes, writing to certain monks in these words, "I might say more, but this is enough for those who daily hear the sacred Scriptures read †." The historians of the abbey of St. Gall expressly mention that selections from the Holy Scriptures, with the comments of the holy Fathers, and the history of Josephus, were read every day at table.

Buildings for hospitality formed a large portion of monastic piles. The apartments for guests were often magnificent, and in French abbeys were sometimes wainscoted with Irish oak, as the room in the palace of king Charles, which was called from it. The Cistercians always had a Xenodochium adjoining the abbey, where every one was received and relieved ‡.

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* Chronic. Cluniacens.

† Epist. cxcii.

‡ Notit. Abbat. Ord. Cist. lib. vii. 57.

Thus we read that king Alfonso, wishing to please the Most High, at the prayer of his serene wife, Eleanor, built a monastery of Cistercians, near the city of Burgos, in a style of great magnificence, and near it a hospital, admirable for its buildings and decoration, which he so richly endowed, that all travellers, at any hour of the day, on applying there, were provided with what they wanted; and every night all who chose might lodge there: and the sick were kept there till their death or recovery; and by the hands of women and men of mercy all things necessary were given to them *.

The historian of Crowland says, that the venerable Abbot John, in his last years, built that solemn and sumptuous hospice which stands between the church and the gates of the abbey, in order that strangers and guests of greater dignity might be lodged there †.

In the account of the rebuilding of the abbey of St. Tron, it is stated that there were within the enclosure two houses of the poor, the one for summer to lodge them, and the other for winter, with fire-places to warm them ‡.

In the monastery of Durham there was the common house, to have a fire kept in it all the winter, for the monks to come and warm themselves at it, as they were not allowed a fire in their own chambers. "Besides which there was a famous house of hospitality, called the guest-hall, within the abbey-garth of Durham, on the west side towards the water, in which entertainment was given to all sorts, noble and gentle, and of what degree soever that came thither as strangers, their entertainment not being inferior to any place in England, both for the goodness of their diet, the sweet and dainty furniture of their lodging, and generally all things necessary for travellers; and with all this entertainment the monks commanded not any one to depart while he continued of honest and good behaviour. This hall is a goodly, brave place, like unto the body of a church, supported on either side by very fine pillars, and in the midst of the hall was a large range for the fire. The chambers and lodgings belonging to it were richly fur-

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* Roderici Toletani de Reb. Hispaniæ, liv. vii. c. 34.

† Ingulphi Hist.

‡ Chronic. Abb. S. Trudonis, liv. x. ap. Dacher. Spicileg. vii.

nished, especially one called the king's chamber, deserving that name *."

At Glastonbury the gothic hostel belonging to the abbey, called the Abbot's Inn, for pilgrims, still exists. It was for the accommodation of persons who could not be lodged within the abbey.

Though we before had occasion to speak of ecclesiastical hospitality in general, we cannot visit the monasteries without briefly recurring to it in reference to the charity of the religious orders. At the monastery of Nitria, on a mountain forty miles from Alexandria, there was a hostel ever open for strangers, where they might remain two or three years, or as long as they wished: only the first week could they be without employment. After eight days they were required to work either in the gardens or in the bakehoue, or to assist in singing the office. Books were kept for the learned. Such was the influence of monastic hospitality in the first ages, that it was the custom even for the citizens of Oryrynchus, where every stranger was received as a brother, to keep watch at the gates for poor pilgrims, to invite them to their houses. Hospitality was thus practised by the monks from the earliest times.

In the twelfth century, when Mathew was abbot of St. Martin-le-Champs, at Paris, the hospitality and charity of that monastery were most remarkable. "It was regarded," we read, "as a kind of common asylum above all those of France for bishops, abbots, lay noblemen, monks, clerks, and poor people. The house was always full, and every one was received with a smiling countenance, which no importunity of the crowds could ever alter †." "If the monks," says Peter the Venerable, "were to wash the feet of all the strangers that come to Cluny, and to prostrate themselves before them, they could do nothing else from sunrise to sunset. We do what we can. Every day we wash the feet and hands of three strangers, and offer bread with wine ‡."

At Cluny there was no porter placed at the gate; for the gates were always open to every one from morning till night, and strangers had only to enter, and they

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* Ancient Monuments of the monastic church of Durham, 139.

† Bibliothec. Cluniacens. 554.

‡ S. Pet. Ven. Epist. lib. i. 28.

found every thing prepared for them *. In abbeys, however, where there was a porter, his duty was to show benignity to all comers. "To all strangers at the gates of our convents," say the commentators on the rule of St. Francis, "our friars must speak sweetly, even though the persons who come there be rude and importunate; for though one cannot always give them alms, one can refuse them with gentleness; and it is certain that a sweet word edifies seculars, whereas the rude reply of one porter, or other friar conversing with seculars, would scandalize them greatly †." St. Benedict in his rule required the porter to be an old and wise man, mature in manners ‡. In fact, no one disdained the office. St. Villibald, from being dean, was made porter of the monastery of Mount Cassino, without its being regarded as a derogation. This was he who afterwards preached the Gospel through Bavaria, and died a holy death in 787 §. The Benedictines were always true to the hospitable charges of their great founder.

"I cannot speak in sufficient detail," says Orderic Vitalis, "of the hospitality of the monks of Bec. Let one ask the Burgundians, Spaniards, and other persons who come from far and near, and they will answer and say truly with what benignity they used to be received by the religious. The gate of Bec is open to all travellers, and no one there is ever refused bread. What shall I add? May He who has begun, and who entertains the good which shines in them, maintain it unto their arrival at the port of salvation ||."

The abbey of Morbac, in a fearful desert, used to be called "Vivarium peregrinorum," as Dom Martene remarks. It is said that Martin, abbot of Alne, in Hainaut, having placed over the gate of his monastery the following line, with this punctuation,

> "Porta patens esto nulli; claudatur honesto,"

was deprived in consequence of his dignity. In certain monasteries of Italy, besides the usual hospitality, the abbot had always three poor persons at his private table. The rector of a college at Rome arriving at Subiaco, and

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* Ib. lib. i. 28.

† Louis de Paris, Expos. de la Règle des FF. Mineurs, 3.

‡ C. 66. § Hist. Cassinens. || Lib. iv.

finding no room in the inns, sent to the abbot of St. Scholastica, to ask whether he could lodge five of his students. The hospitality of this house must have resembled that of the Phæacians, who, as Homer says, used not only to receive every one coming to them from east or west, but furnish them with an escort, and youths to conduct them, and means to enable them to continue their journey; for the answer of that holy man was sent back along with five horses, to carry them up to the monastery.

William of Malmesbury records, that, in the monastery of Redding, founded by King Henry I., for monks of Cluny, it being a great thoroughfare, more money was expended in hospitably entertaining poor guests, than in supporting the whole community of monks. In another monastery, there used to be more than one hundred tables laid out in one day*. In 1310, an abbot gave a feast to six thousand guests, for whom were prepared three thousand dishes. In the monastery of Villers, the key of the cellar used to be placed in a cleft in the neighbouring rock, and whoever wanted wine might there take it for his necessity†. In the year 1058, the venerable Father Abbot Wulketulus gave to the monastery of Crowland, the chapel of St. Mary, at Spaldyng, with all the buildings belonging to it, to defray the expense of hospitality to the poor and to the rich, of whom there was generally there a great concourse ‡. Similarly, the church of Hesel was to be assigned by Pope Innocent III. to the prior and canons of Gisborne, because they give to every one asking, and apply their goods to hospitality with such zeal that no one departs from them empty-handed §. The abbot Suger provided for the exercise of a most ingenious and needful hospitality; for he established twelve monks in the priory of St. Denis, who were bound to entertain three converted Jews ||.

One can readily understand, from these details, that large provision was necessary to meet such demands upon monastic benevolence, since the reception of strangers

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* Bolland, die 11 Jan. c. vii.

† Hist. Mon. Villariensis, lib. ii. Prol. ap. Martene, Thes. Anec. iii.

‡ Hist. Ingulphi, 66.

§ Epist. Inn. iii. lib. xiii. 208.

|| Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, iii. 210.

within religious houses was not to resemble what the poet speaks of,—

"———— prompt, but cold;
A loveless service, bought and sold."

Hence, in the cellars of the abbey of Cîteaux there were, in 1202, twenty thousand measures of wine, classed according to the ages of ten, fifteen, and twenty years; and there were amphoras of baked earth, containing wines of Clovoujeaux, which dated from the preaching of St. Bernard *.

The sarcastic inference which the moderns generally draw from hearing such details might suggest a painful reflection here. Alcinous, while entertaining Ulysses, adds this encouragement to his invitation to feast on—

———— *ὄφρα καὶ ἄλλῳ*
εἴπῃς ἡρώων, ὅτε κεν σοῖς ἐν μεγάροισιν
δαινύῃ παρὰ σῇ τ' ἀλόχῳ καὶ σοῖσι τέκεσσιν,
ἡμετέρης ἀρετῆς μεμνημένος.

Alas! nature seems to have degenerated since those times: for the monk who now receives a stranger to hospitality might adopt the converse of this invitation, and say, "Eat and drink, that you may proclaim to your countrymen, when you are at table in your own house with your wife and children, that the monk is always what the Pharisees said our Master was,—'a drunkard and a glutton!'"

Pisistratus says to Telemachus, that a guest remembers all his days the hospitable gifts of hosts †. The guests of monks, in modern times, have furnished an exception. Capefigue speaks ironically of the sweet life reserved for penitent barons in Cîteaux and Clairvaux, and seems to think that, like Homer's heroes, the monks were always at table, and that they did or said nothing until they had satisfied their minds with eating and drinking: as if every minute one might say of them—

οἱ δ' ἐπ' ὀνείαθ' ἑτοῖμα προκείμενα χεῖρας ἴαλλον.

Le Grand d'Aussy attacks them with great bitterness, in a long chapter upon sauces and ragouts. It is in vain to expostulate with such adversaries, who cannot be made to comprehend what were the consolations of faith. But the truth is, that the provision made for the monks was of a different kind: their daily bread was not what men of this kind so greatly esteem,—what Homer calls the medicine for grief; that which induces forgetfulness of all evils; such wine as Helen poured out to Telemachus, which could dispel all desire of weeping, even though one had lost a father or a mother, or had seen perish before one's eyes a brother or a dear son,—but a chapter of the Imitation, more efficacious to console their spirits than all the mixtures of Egypt.

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* Comptes MSS. de l'Ab. Citeaux, Bib. du Roi ap. Capefigue.
† xv. 54.

Perhaps, however, it may be well to observe in conclusion, that, where monks were not bound to exercise hospitality on this scale, there was nothing in their storerooms that could excite envy. In the first general congregation of the Capuchins, in 1529, it was decreed, that never more than provision for one week was to be laid up, and nothing beyond it was ever to be received in alms. No superior was to suffer any cask of wine to be in the convent, but only an open vessel or jug, containing what was necessary *.

The philosophers of old used to have the images of their masters not only painted on their walls, but also graven on cups and rings, and other objects. Thus, Pomponius says, that he had ever before him the image of Epicurus †. The Christian sages of the cloister, in like manner, loved to be surrounded by memorials of the saints, to remind them of the deeds and sayings of the friends of God.

To monasteries, therefore, came the arts, which illustrate all the echoes of the human world, which tell of sanctity and justice, and mild Compassion, "progeny immortal,—of Painting, Sculpture, Music, and rapt Poesy,—swift shapes and sounds, which grow more fair and soft as man grows wise and kind." Our abbeys, even in their ruined state, are often still "populous with carved imagery,—beauteous, holy shapes,—whose marble smiles fill the hushed air with everlasting love." They are deserted now; but once they bore thy name, O Jesus, Prince of Peace! In the fifteenth century, when the heretics broke into St. Gall, they loaded forty-six wagons with the wood fragments of the images, which

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* Ann. Capucinorum.

† Cicero de Finibus, lib. v.

they burnt in a fire that was forty-three feet broad: those of stone were carried off, to be employed in making walls; and those of copper, which were the work of Tutilo, they broke to pieces. The choir was surrounded with exquisite carving, which they demolished. The walls of the church represented, in painting, the life of St. Gall and St. Othmar, which they whitewashed over. Many superb paintings stood over the different altars, and many curious works of ancient art surrounded them, all which they destroyed. The ruined abbey of St. Riquier is still full of emblematic sculpture and images of saints, with representations under each of some scene connected with his life. The walls are curiously painted in fresco, representing historical events, with inscriptions beneath, but in a character so ancient that my unpractised eye could not decipher them. Nothing can exceed the beauty of Our Lady's chapel behind the choir. In the church are many altars, over most of which are represented saints in the Benedictine habit.

But let us contemplate the houses that escaped the destroyers' hands. How many stories, pictured on the cloister-walls in old Toledo! how many under the solemn arches of monasteries in the desert, from forgotten books, or from lips long silent in the grave! What an historic and religious interest belongs to these old portraits of founders and benefactors which are found in abbeys! where they recal, as at Hauterive, the heroic virtues of a Count William de Glana; or, as in the Dominican convent at Bologna, the countenance of the angelic doctor! In the abbey of Einsiedelin one sees painted the Emperor St. Henry, with St. Volfgang, his preceptor, a former monk of that house, standing by his side. On his left is represented St. Gerold, who from being a prince became a hermit there; and near him are Counon and Ulric, his two sons, who consoled his last days by putting on the cowl. The interest which many great artists felt in monasteries contributed to fill them with paintings, even when the monks themselves did not take up the pencil. Thus we find the frescos of Pinturicchio, and a picture of the Blessed Virgin by Leonardo de Vinci, in a corridor of the cloister of St. Onuphrio. Similarly, Dominic Ghirlandajo having an especial veneration for the order of Dominicans, it was in their church of Santa Maria-novella, at Florence, that he had painted his masterpiece. His family had their burial there. His son, Rodolph Ghirlandajo, had felt the full power of the preaching of Savonarola, and he devoted his pencil to transmit his paternal tradition of art. Ghiberti, the most ancient historian of art in Italy, speaks with enthusiasm of a great composition with which Ambrose de Lorenzo had covered the walls of a cloister, in which he represented the life of a Christian missionary. One saw, at first, a young man taking the habit of a monk ; then the same, entreating permission to be sent, along with others of the brethren, to Asia, to convert the Saracens ; then their departure, their arrival near the Sultan, who orders them to be scourged ; then the listening people ; further on, the Sultan condemning them to die ; their decapitation ; and, after it, a horrible tempest, before which vast trees are broken and torn up by the roots, while the people fly in terror *.

In the refectory of the convent of San Salvi, one mile from Florence, there were painted, by André del Sarto, four figures of saints, and the Last Supper ; and it is recorded, that, during the siege in 1529, when the Florentines were obliged to demolish all buildings in that part, when they came before this great fresco they were struck dumb and motionless with admiration. At the entrance of the cloister of the abbey of St. Venne, at Verdun, Dom Martene remarked a painting of the Emperor St. Henry, whose belt and pike were still preserved in the treasury there, offering to submit his crown and sceptre, and demanding the religious habit from the holy abbot Richard, who commands him to resume the government of his states, with these verses :—

> " Pertæsus regere Henricus venit ecce regendus,
> Vult utrumque abbas, nempe regendo regi †."

The paintings in the monastic churches were often singularly impressive, from the lesson they were designed to convey. In the abbey of Einsiedelin our Lord is represented saying to Zacchæus, " This day I will lodge in thy house,"—to prepare men for communion. The promise of God to Abraham,—" Faciam te in magnam gentem,"—is made to indicate the propagation of the Benedictines ; and the alliance with Noah,—" Fac tibi

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* Rio de l'Art Chrét. 49.

† Voyage Lit. 95.

arcam et fœdus ponam tecum,"—the deliverance of those who embraced the monastic state. Over the sacristy, meekness is represented by a symbolic figure, and on the ceiling the verse of the Apocalypse, "Around the throne were seated twenty-four old men, clothed with white and wearing crowns." Here the sword is only borne as a sign of martyrdom, as the only blood shed by those who bear it was their own.

In the abbey of St. Denis was a mystic painting of St. Paul turning a mill, and the prophets carrying each a sack to it, to signify his office of interpreting the Old Testament. This abbey itself, with its imagery, was, like many others, history and theology. The historical portraits found in monasteries were often deeply interesting. Thus in the cloisters of the Carmelites at Florence there was a great painting by Masaccio, representing a procession, at the end of which were introduced the most illustrious personages of Florence.

In the convent of the Celestins at Paris was a chapel founded by Louis d'Orleans, brother of Charles VI., in 1393, in which all members of that family were represented in robes of ceremony; and in the cloisters of the Carmelite Friary, in the place Maubert, the family of St. Louis were painted wearing their court-dresses. Dom Pez does not disdain to insert among his historical documents the inscriptions under the long series of portraits which are in the monastery of Clauster-Nenburg, representing the ancient marquesses and dukes of Austria, of the line of Babenberg, with their wives and daughters *. But it was sacred pictures which the monasteries possessed in greatest number. The monks felt deeply that art is godlike, a branch of the divinest studies. One holy brother, lately in the Escurial monastery, as a modern poet tells us, "Guiding from cell to cell and room to room, a British painter left not unvisited a glorious work, our Lord's Last Supper, from the hand of Titian, beautiful as when first it graced the refectory. There, while both stood with eyes fixed upon that masterpiece, the holy Father in the stranger's ear spoke these words, 'Here daily do we sit, thanks given to God for daily bread, and here, pondering the mischiefs of these restless times, and thinking of my

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* Pez, Rer. Aust. Script. tom. i.

brethren dead, dispersed, or changed and changing, I not seldom gaze upon this solemn company unmoved by shock of circumstance or lapse of years, until I cannot but believe that they—they are in truth the substance, we the shadows.'" So spake the mild Jeronymite, his griefs melting away within him like a dream, ere he had ceased to gaze, perhaps to speak: "And I," adds the poet, grown old, but in a happier land, "have to verse consigned those heart-moving words, words that can soothe more than they agitate." Still monasteries were not to be academies of art, as the philosophers of the cloister failed not to remind each other from time to time, as if to guard against the exaggeration which they foresaw might ensue. "It may be well," says Hugo of St. Victor, "that monks who dwell in cities, to whom the crowds of people resort, should have the delight of paintings for the simplicity of those who are not delighted with the subtilty of Scripture; but for us who are pleased with solitude, a horse or an ox is more useful in the field than on the wall. The one pleases the eyes, the others minister to necessity *." St. Bernard on one occasion even complains of the grotesque sculpture found in the cloisters. "What," he exclaims, "is this ridiculous monstruosity, this certain strange deformed beauty and beautiful deformity? Why are these unclean apes there? What are these lions, these monstrous centaurs doing? What these half-men, these spotted panthers, these fighting warriors, these horn-sounding huntsmen? You can see under one head many bodies, and again on one body many heads. Here a quadruped with the end of a serpent; there a fish with the head of a quadruped. Here a beast with the forepart like a horse, and the hind like a goat; there a horned animal, half-horse. So many and so strange are the forms, that one is more tempted to read in marble than in books, and to pass the whole day in admiring these things †." In fact, even to the objects which were expressly for utility, there was generally a certain beauty or curiosity imparted. The very clocks of abbeys were often prodigies of art. That of Glastonbury, made by Peter Lightfoot, a monk in the fourteenth century, exhibited on the dial, divided

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* De Claustro Animæ, lib. ii. c. 4.

† S. Bernard. Apolog. ad Guillel. c. xii.

into twenty-four hours, the diurnal and nocturnal time, with the solar, lunar, and other astronomic motions, while figures of armed knights on horseback were seen riding about it in all directions. Of the deep symbolic and religious imagery, *φωνᾶντα συνέτοις*, which covered the walls of monasteries, it would be difficult to form an idea without long observation of the ancient buildings. On one portal in France is represented the whole history of man from the creation to the last judgment, according to the order adopted by Vincent de Beauvais, in his Mirror of the World: for there is seen, as Didron remarks, the creation, and the obligation of man to labour through the twelve months of the year, and this represents the speculum naturale. Then, man having fallen, must rise again by science; therefore, in addition to manual labour, the seven liberal arts are seen, and this corresponds to the speculum doctrinale. Thus man knows; but he must make a good use of his knowledge; therefore in the next place are shown virtues, social, domestic, and interior. Among the first are read, liberty, promptitude, friendship; among the second all household virtues, represented by women as matrons working; among the third, faith, hope, and charity, as also the cardinal virtues; and this corresponds to the speculum morale. Lastly, man thus informed, proceeds to act, and hence are shown all the personages of the Old and New Testament, ending with a representation of the end of the world in the final judgment; and this answers to the speculum historiale. As in these sculptures containing 3000 images all this is shown only in brief symbols, the whole is developed at length on the stained-glass windows of the church in 6000 figures; so that nothing can exceed the grandeur of this sublime poem. Moreover, the instruction conveyed by the separate parts is admirable. Thus in all representations of Cherubim and Seraphim, the one cannot be distinguished from the other, for the reason that love and science were deemed inseparable. Again the blood flowing from the Lamb is poured upon the martyrs, to show that the shedding of their own would be of no avail without that of Jesus Christ; and at the last judgment, the Christ appears without pity; he shows his hands pierced, and repels all with the spectacle. Even his blessed mother and St. John appear afraid. St. Michael weighs the souls; the season of mercy has past; it is now that of justice.

From an inspection of the monasteries it is clear also that the poem of Dante exercised a great influence on art. The nine circles of hell were represented in an abbey of Friuli and in the cloisters of the Olivetans, at Volterra. With respect to the hands which executed these paintings in cloisters, we may observe that the greatest number were either the work of the monks themselves, or else the pious offering of artists, and sometimes memorials of their gratitude; as when Rubens painted his great picture of the adoration of the shepherds for the Franciscans of Soissons, to show his sense of the charity they had exercised towards him during his sickness, when on his journey from Antwerp to Paris in 1622 *. "This year, 895," say the Corby annals, "Theodegarius, our brother, gave to the convent, to be in memory of him, our Lord's Passion, curiously depicted with a pen, an artificial work admired by all." From brother Conrad of Vienna, says another monastic diary, we received some solemn pictures †. Painting and sculpture were not however the only medium of instruction in the adornment of cloisters. Inscriptions for the same purpose were also generally used. "Upon the walls and pillars," says Weever, relating the destruction of the abbeys in England, "certain inscriptions used to be painted or engraven, which being holden to be superstitious, were then defaced, washed over, or obliterated. Thus under the blessed Trinity it had been usual to read,

> 'Ave Pater, Rex Creator, ave fili, lux, Servator.
> Ave pax et charitas.
> Ave simplex, ave Trine, ave regnans sine fine
> Una summa Trinitas.'

And under the crucifix,

> 'Quantum pro nobis Christus tulit esse videmus,
> Et tamen à lachrymis heu lumina sicca tenemus ‡.'"

Lydgate ascribes a pious inspiration, which suggested

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* Hist. de Soissons, ii. 38.

† Necrolog. R. R. P. P. Minorum Conv. Vienn. ap. Pez Script. Rer. Aust. ii.

‡ A Discourse of Funeral Monuments.

to him the composition of a hymn on the Passion, to his having read similar lines in an abbey when a boy:—

"Within fyftene, holdyng my passage
Mydde of a cloyster, depyct upon a wall
I sawe a crucyfixe, whose woundes were not small,
With this worde vide written there besyde,
'Beholde my mekenes, chyld, and leave thy pride.'"

John of Whethamstede, the learned abbot of St. Alban's, in the reign of Henry VI., among other images and ornaments placed in the church of that abbey the figures of certain heathen philosophers, who had testified of the incarnation of Christ, and under them these lines—

"Istac qui gradieris hos testes si memoreris,
Credere vim poteris proles Deus est mulieris."

The walls of that abbey were covered with curious painted imagery, and also with pious inscriptions in golden characters. Weever gives the verses inscribed in the abbot's lodging, those in the walk between his chamber and the hall, those in the windows of the abbot's library, those in the chamber adjoining his study, and those upon the roof over the chancel. On one wall was written an admonition to princes—

"Non bene concessum princeps regit ille Ducatum
Concilio procerum qui non regitur sapientum.
Judex quando sedes caveas ne jura supines
Jure quidem tradito. Plebs Rex est, Rex sine regno."

In one window of the library was written—

"Cum studeas, videas, ut sit virtus et honestas;
Hic, et ubique tibi finalis causa studendi."

Suger says, "that on the doors of the abbey church of St. Denis, on which were represented the passion, resurrection, and ascension of our Saviour, these verses were inscribed—

"Portarum quisquis attollere quæris honorem,
Aurum nec sumptus, operis mirare laborem.
Nobile claret opus, sed opus quod, nobile claret,
Clarificet mentes ut eant per lumina vera
Ad verum lumen, ubi Christus janua vera.
Quale sit intus in his determinat aurea porta.

Mens hebes ad verum per materialia surgit,
Et demersa prius hac visa luce resurgit *."

Similar inscriptions, suitable to the office of each place in the monastery, were generally found. Thus in the abbey of Mount Cassino, over the place for washing, were these lines—

"Ut foris oblectet nitor, hunc decet intus haberis,
Si tua mens sordet, quid erit si laveris ora
Aut oculos, puro corde lavato manus †."

Before the cross in the centre of the great hall of the dead in the abbey of Cîteaux was this inscription—

"Hic deponuntur monachi quando moriuntur,
Hinc assumuntur animæ sursumque deferuntur."

In the cloister were these solemn verses, reminding men that the form of this world was passing away—

"Mundus abit, fortis sim, non ero: sim speciosus,
Non ero: sim dives, non ero, mundus abit.
Mundus abit, non Christus abit, cole non abeuntem ‡."

In the palace of Lucullus the apartments were called after the names of the gods, Apollo, Jupiter, &c. In the monastery of St. Benedict the chambers are distinguished by the names of saints. Passing along the corridores in the convent of the Franciscans at Loretto, I observed over the door of each cell some pious sentence from the Holy Scriptures or the writings of the fathers. Sometimes the tradition respecting him who once inhabited the cell served instead of any device, as in the room next the library in that Dominican convent of St. Agostino, in which Albertus Magnus lived for a while. To walk through the Carthusian monastery of Calci, among the mountains of Pisa, and mark the inscriptions which are presented at every step, is a useful study in itself, and the words seem to come with a greater force than they could from any book. Over the entrance I read, "Ingrediatur gens justa custodiens veritatem;" at one end of a long corridore, "Posuit eos Deus in Paradiso voluptatis;" over the door of a cell, "In soli-

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* Sug. Lib. de Rebus in Administratione sua Gestis, ap. Duchesne, iv.

† Hist. Casinensis.

‡ Martene, Voyage Lit. 219.

tudine boni mores virtutesque omnes discuntur." Most of the lines, however, are commemorative of our Saviour's passion, or taken from his last sermon; and one feels that one is in the house of his dearest familiar friends, who cannot rest without having his sweet image and his divine words ever before them. But it is time to repose after this long inspection. Already from these first glances we can understand the justice of Dom Martene's observation with respect to the monastery of St. Remi at Rheims, when he says, "that every time he visits it, he remarks something new that had previously escaped his notice." So it is in general with all these ancient abbeys, where the friends of God may justly say that they live at peace in splendid poverty. Yes, the inscription in the church of the Carthusians near Pavia, "Nimis honorati sunt amici tui Deus," explains the magnificence of that incomparable monastery, and expresses the true reason of the grandeur and beauty of all others. And, in effect, who can cease to admire the grandeur and the beauty of these holy retreats, where every thing glorious in art as well as nature seems concentrated to wait upon religion? What a triumph for all that value intellectual good that there should be thus already a happy earth where men of good-will can enjoy a foretaste of the calm of heaven! that for them there should be such a pure dwelling-place, where there is a quiet solemn voice of sober reason in all the parts, which reaches the most thoughtless ear, "while every shape and mode of matter lends its force to the omnipotence of mind, which, from its dark mine, drags the gem of truth to decorate this paradise of peace."

CHAPTER VII.

A MONASTERY, viewed on its heroic side, was a great country mansion, or ancestral palace antique, and venerable, full of charms for those who have an owl-like fondness for old walls and ivy, full of curious memorials, retaining traditions from the olden time, and boasting of ancestors who shed an eternal renown upon the family which inhabited it. How would an ordinary house have gloried in having for its founder such a hero as St. William, whose abbey in the desert yet bears his name? Orderic Vitalis says that this glorious knight was the theme of minstrelsy with the Jongleurs. Ducatel has discovered an old romance in his honour divided into four parts, treating on the childhood of William, the coronation of Lewis, le charroi de Nismes, and the monastic life, le moinage of William,

> Moult essauça sancte chrétientés
> Tant fit en terre qu'es cieux est couronnés *.

Every kind of glory, in fact, shed lustre upon the memory of many founders of abbeys in the middle ages, whose merit could not have been exaggerated by the gratitude of their respective communities. Charlemagne himself, in a certain charter to the monastery of St. Bertin at St. Omer, boasts of his being of the lineage of its founder. "Et quoniam," he says, "idem sanctus de genere nostro fuisse dignoscitur." And no less honourable to it was another to the same church, in which we find Roland and Olivier named as witnesses †. Well might the monks of Boulancour, in the diocese of Troyes, esteem as a glory their possession of many charts from such men as the seigneurs of Joinville and Villardouin, who had been the benefactors of that house, which they enriched with many relics that they had brought with them from the East ‡. Independent of religious grounds the monks in general seem to evince towards their founders that kind of reverential gratitude which Homer's men so invariably cherish for their benefactors, as when Eumæus says of his old master—

> *τὸν μὲν ἐγὼν, ὦ ξεῖνε, καὶ οὐ παρεόντ' ὀνομάζειν*
> *αἰδέομαι.*

One is naturally led to take this heroic view of the monastic institution on being admitted into the treasury of an abbey which contained often so many titles to suggest and substantiate it.

Having seen enough now of towers and columns, of walls and gates, let us follow this good monk who is about to show the ancient estimable things preserved in the most secret recesses of his house; for the spectacle will be curious and instructive as well as religious. We first have to pass by the costly deposits which appertained not to his community, for such were often found in monasteries, as at Rheims, in the abbey of St. Denis, where the public money and also the silver and jewels of private persons used to be placed for security in the hands of the abbot and canons exclusively, who alone had the key; and as at Durham and at Strata Florida, where the gentry of the country kept their deeds and genealogies, the registers of their baptisms and marriages, in the archivium of the monks. Lupus, abbot of Ferrers, writes to Hildain, saying, "I do not wonder that you should have thought of committing your treasure to our custody, since you did not know the situation of our monastery; but if you had known it you certainly would not have left it with us three days; for though the access is difficult to pirates, to whom, for our sins, no length of distance is long, yet the weakness of the place, and the small number of men fit to resist, kindles the avidity of the rapacious, especially as we are surrounded with woods through which they can easily escape *." Let us examine that part only which contains the property of the abbey, and we shall find that even the monastic treasures partook of an Homeric character—

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* Longueval, Hist. de l'Eglise Gal. v. 122.

† Chronic. Monast. S. Bertini, p. ii. cap. i. c. vii. ap. Martene, Thes. Anecdot. iii.

‡ Desguerrois, Hist. des Diocèse de Troyes, 289.

Gems, marbles, ivory, pictures, silver, precious vestments—
Sunt qui non habeant, est qui non curet habere.

The monks, and in ages of faith many of those who visited them, verified the latter part of this line. When pope Paschal came into France, say the chronicles, he visited the abbey of St. Denis, where he was received most solemnly; but a wonderful and memorable example did he leave on this occasion to all present and future, for he did not deign so much as to look at either gold or silver, or ornament of precious stones, which were in the abbey, but only prostrated himself devoutly and wept before the holy bodies as one who offered himself wholly to God and to his saints †.

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* Lupi Epist. cx.

† Chroniques de St. Denis, ad an. 1107.

Supposing the reader nevertheless ever so devout, I do beseech him now to raise up his eyes a little, and survey with me for a moment "bags of fiery opals, sapphires, amethysts, jacinths, hard topaz, grass-green emeralds, beauteous rubies, sparkling diamonds, and seld-seen costly stones, of so great price as one of them indifferently rated may serve in peril of calamity to ransom great kings from captivity." "I delight," says Cardan, "in little instruments of ingenuity, in gems, in vessels, in brass and silver canisters, and in glass globes *." He would be delighted here then, where he would find so many exquisite things like that chalice in the treasury of St. Gall, ex electro, miro opere, or those cups in that of St. Maurice, composed of agates and alabaster; though sooth, at first, notwithstanding the authority of so profound a philosopher in favour of them, one cannot but wonder to find such objects in such a place; for though they are all gifts, yet being as unsuitable presents to monks as horses would have been to the prince of Ithaca †, the question still recurs how came they here? Their intrinsic value, however, explains the difficulty; for that rendered them, it was thought, worthy offerings to testify the piety of the donors. Thus Catherine of Lorraine, who preferred the quality of Benedictin nun to that of wife of the emperor Maximilian, gave to the Benedictine monastery of the holy-sacrament at Nancy, which she founded, all the jewels that had been given to her by princes. I do not deny, but immemorial custom, and traces perhaps of ancient manners to the influence of which, in some degree, men, in spite of themselves, continued to be subject, may sometimes have dictated the choice of objects. The usual gifts bestowed by Homer's heroes to their parting guests were golden cups and goblets. Menelaus says he will give Telemachus the most beautiful and honourable present, a cup of silver circled with gold at the brim, the work of Vulcan; and then he mentions through how many princely owners' hands it has passed to his own ‡. In monasteries we find cups and goblets thus presented, and a careful record kept of the history of each. Thus Witlafius, king of the Mercians, in his charter to the

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* Hier. Card. de Vita Propria, lib. ii. c. 8.

† iv.

‡ xv. 114.

monastery of Crowland in 833, among other gifts says, "I offer to the refectory the horn of my table, 'ut senes monasterii bibant inde in festis sanctorum, et in suis benedictionibus meminerint aliquando animæ donatoris Witlafii *.'" Charles the Bald "gave to the abbey of St. Denis le Hanap Salomon," supposed to have belonged to king Solomon, "which is of pure gold," says the chronicle of St. Denis, "and of fine emeralds and fine grains so marvellously worked, that in all the kingdoms of the world there was never so subtle a work †."

The hanap which the sultan of Persia, Aaroun, sent to Charlemagne, was in the abbey of the Madeleine at Châteaudun. The abbey of St. Riquier, in the eighth century, possessed thirteen hanaps. In the abbey of Stavelot Dom Martene saw a golden cup, which Wibaldus had brought from Constantinople. These cups in very ancient times were used on great occasions in the refectory, not for the purpose of drinking to the saints—a custom anathematized by a council of Nantes, Hincmar, archbishop of Rheims, writing against such a profanation, and Charlemagne prohibiting it in his capitularies ‡—but for festivity at great banquets, such as Dom Martene describes as having been given by the holy and humble abbot of Corby, in Saxony, on the day of his own arrival there, on occasion of the dedication of a chapel, when he remarked that whenever the abbot drank to the health of any one, the person, whatever might be his rank, stood up while he drank §. The use of such goblets, however, did not even imply so much of festivity; for Salomon, abbot of St. Gall, who died in 920, who used to drink only water at meal-times, drank nevertheless out of a heavy golden goblet, set round with jewels, corresponding to the basin in his bed-chamber, which was a most exquisite work of old Greek art. In the treasury, moreover, the sacred vessels were also placed; respecting each of which there was often some curious history or tradition. Let us take an instance: In the time of blessed Henry, emperor, there was in Germany a certain blind man, who, being moved by what he heard preached, that he who left any thing for God, should receive an

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* Hist. Ingulphi, p. 9.

† Ad an. 877.

‡ Le Grand d'Aussy, Hist. de la Vie Privée des François, iii. 316.

§ Voyage Lit. i. 257.

hundredfold, notwithstanding the remonstrances of his wife, gave his cow to the poor. Soon afterwards, going as usual to matins, his foot struck against something; so, stooping down, he found a bag on the ground, which was small, but heavy. On returning home he gave it to his wife, who opened it, and found it was full of gold; part of which she kept, carrying the rest to a goldsmith, who purchased it from her, pretending that it was only brass. Now it happened that St. Henry came to that city at this time, and one of his servants lost a gold spur. This man, fearing for the result, went to the same goldsmith, and purchased from him another in its stead. The emperor, however, perceived that one of his spurs was new, and enquired the cause, when the whole history was brought to light, as the emperor sent for the smith, and enquired respecting the quality of the gold, which, after hearing the story, he concluded was celestial. Taking the gold from the blind man's wife, he gave them in exchange for it the villa which is now called Plinlendorff, and of the gold he caused to be made an immense chalice, with two handles, which he gave to the church of blessed Laurence at Aystedt; and with this chalice mass used to be offered for the emperor's soul after his death. This is shown once a year on Maundy Thursday *.

The ancient ex votos, could the history attached to them be all known, would be a study in itself not a little curious and edifying. "I remember," says the historian of the abbey of Monte Sereno, or Lauterberg, "having heard one of our brethren say, that the person who brought the silver ship, and offered it at the altar, mentioned at the time that he had been delivered from a great tempest †." How many affecting memorials of heaven's mercy and of man's injustice are treasured here, could we but read them right! but the mysterious tale is only half-disclosed, and sealed is now each lip that could have told it.

The riches of the monasteries in plate arose from the prodigious quantity of gold and silver which existed in

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* Anon. Leobiensis Chronic. lib. i. An. MVIII. ap. Pez, Script. Rer. Austriac. 1.

† Chronicon Montis Sereni ap. Menckenii Script. Rer. Germ. 11.

the middle ages, a large part of which passed to them in the way of offerings from the devotion of the lay nobility. The Comte de Foix, in 1457, gave a banquet, at which were twelve tables of seven services each, and for each service there were 140 silver plates. Le Grand d'Aussy remarks that Louis XIV. could show nothing comparable to the riches in this respect of King Charles V., an inventory of whose plate still exists*. When Louis-le-Gros died, he left all his gold and silver plate to be distributed among different abbeys. Philippe-Auguste by his last will left to the abbey of St. Denis all his jewels, precious stones, and crosses of gold, on condition that twenty monks should there daily say mass for his soul. The curious drinking horns and vases, mounted on stags, and lions, and boars, used by kings, were often left to monasteries. Henry V. gave a gold service, representing Agincourt, Honfleur, and other places where he had triumphed, to the convent of Sion, which was only melted down within late years by some London Jews, to whom it had been pledged for money to supply the necessities of that poor community during their abode in Lisbon. In the annals of Corby, under the date of 1171, we read, "Henry de Aslob, in honour of the twelve Apostles, gave to St. Vitus twelve cups, each with the effigy of an Apostle, and Othelricus de Svalenberg gave a silver goose on the feast of St. Martin for fraternity†." "These pieces of plate in abbeys," says Le Grand d'Aussy, "were never used by the monks, but they were preserved in the treasury among other curiosities which used to be shown on certain days and hours." The abbey of St. Riquier in the eighth century possessed, besides these hanaps already spoken of, knives adorned with gold and jewels, and a silver inkstand. Similar presents used to be shown in the convent of Fontanelle, and in many other religious houses. The monastery of Fleury sent many pieces of plate, amongst which were two candelabras weighing 30 marks, to Louis-le-Jeune, when he was to set out for the Holy Land.

"Charles the Bald," says the chronicle of St. Denis, "gave to the martyrs his great imperial crown, which on grand festivals is suspended before the high altar, with the crowns of other kings *."

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* Hist. de la Vie Privée des François, iii. 262.

† An. Corb. ap. Leibnitz Script. Bruns. iii.

The kings of France in general left their crowns to the abbey of St. Denis. "Siconolf," says the historian of Mount Casino, "carried off the treasures of the abbey, consisting of the rich presents of Kings Charles and Pepin, of Karlomann and Louis, and others—in form of chalices and patens, crowns and crosses, phials and vases, and precious ornaments, and 130 pounds of the purest gold, and silk with gold and gems, besides the golden crown of his father, admirably adorned with carbuncles, and a quantity of gold and silver coin †."

When the Danes arrived at the abbey of Peterborough, in 1070, they took away the golden crown in the church, embellished with gems, from the head of the crucifix, and the golden stool, set also with gems, from beneath its feet, two golden biers, and nine others of silver, adorned with gold and gems, and twelve crosses, some of gold and others of silver, gilt and gemmed, and an antipendium, all of gold and silver and precious stones.

In the monastery of Ripon were four Gospels, written on a purple ground in letters of gold, enclosed in a golden casket, which had been ordered by St. Wilfrid. The furniture for St. Ina's famous chapel in the abbey of Glastonbury, the construction of which cost 2600 pounds of silver, while the value of the altar was estimated at 264 pounds of gold, was suitable to its splendour. The covers of the Gospels were of gold, above twenty pounds in weight. The priest's vestments were interwoven with gold, and cunningly ornamented with precious stones. The treasury of Crowland abbey was equally remarkable. We read of one abbot of St. Alban's, Simon Langham, giving to that abbey at one time copes, vestments, and other ornaments, to the value of 437 pounds. The chalices, remonstrances, crosses, shrines, and binding of books, which the Lutheran plunderers found in the abbey of St. Gall in 1532, were of immense value, and many of these objects had been in the abbey 600 years.

We may observe that many things also, of pure curiosity, existed in the treasuries of abbeys. Torquemade, who delights in the marvellous, says that the Franciscans

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* Ad an. 877.

† Chronic. S. Monast. Casinensis, c. 20.

of a convent in Valencia possessed some enormous bones, which Synforian Campegio, who saw them, supposed to be those of a giant. No doubt in many monasteries fossil remains, and other objects of great natural curiosity, were preserved from ancient times, but things historical were chiefly regarded. In the treasury of the abbey of the Isle Barbe was preserved the horn of Roland, which the head of the family of Mont-d'or, who believed itself descended from him, enjoyed the privilege of exposing once every year. The chess-board and men of Charlemagne were preserved for many ages in the abbey of St. Denis. Innumerable precious works of art came into the monasteries of the west on the taking of Constantinople in 1204 by the crusaders. In the abbey of Rheinau was a wooden cross, nine inches high, cut out of a single piece, which showed in more than 100 figures the chief passages of our Saviour's life, with Greek inscriptions added, which the monks then acquired.

What curious and precious works of art were in the monastery of St. Florentine of Saumur in 1004! The abbot Robert, who was a diligent enquirer, obtained a multitude of unheard-of ornaments, great screens of wool, which were extended in the choir on high solemnities, representing scenes from the Apocalypse, curtains and tapestry covered with figures of great lions in fields of blood, and others with white borders, in which were beasts and birds: he also made two shields of wondrous size and beauty. The abbot Mathew also made two dorsals, and abbot Adhebert is said to have made two silver candelabras *.

Among inestimable treasures of jewels in the abbey of St. Stephen at Troyes, Dom Martene saw the Psalter of Count Henry, the founder of that abbey, written in letters of gold, still fresh after more than 800 years. In the treasury of Citeaux he remarked the ancient breviaries of the monks, written in small letters, on little moveable sheets, for the purpose of being given in parts to monks who travelled. He saw there also the chair which belonged to St. Bernard when he was a novice. In the abbey of St. Maximin, at Treves, he says is a text of the Gospels in letters of gold, covered with inestimable jewels, a present from the Princess Ada, daughter of King

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* Chronic. Turonense ap. Martene Vet. Script. v.

Pepin, sister of Charlemagne, at the end of which are these verses in uncial letters:

"Hic liber est vitæ, paradisi, et quatuor amnes,
Clara salutiferi pandens miracula Christi,
Quæ pius ob nostram voluit fecisse salutem:
Quem devota Deo jussit prescribere mater
Ada ancilla Dei, pulchrisque ornare metallis,
Pro qua, quisque legat versus, orare memento."

In the abbey of St. Riquier he saw a text of the Gospels in golden letters, on purple vellum, given to St. Angilbert by Charlemagne, and also the original manuscript chronicle of the monastery by Hariulfe.

We may observe, that the very charters and letters preserved in old monasteries possessed a high degree of interest. "Please it you to understand," writes one of Cromwell's miserable agents, "that in the reading of the muniments and charters of the house of Ramsey, I found a charter of King Edgar, written in a very antique Roman hand, hardly to be read at the first sight. I am sure you would delight to see the same, for the strangeness and antiquity thereof." In monasteries there were often preserved the letters of ancient kings and great men. Thus the Dominicans at Barcelona possessed a letter, in the handwriting of St. Louis, to father Francis de Cendra *. The famous charter, de Libertatibus Comitatus Devon., granted by King John, and its confirmation by his son Henry III., were preserved in the abbey of Tavistock †.

In the abbey of St. Germain-des-Près was preserved the charter of its foundation by Clotaire, or a very ancient copy of it, and a diploma to the abbey of St. Denis in the seventh century, both of which I have seen in the archives of the hotel Soubise. Both are legible, the original material having been cemented in later times upon a kind of cloth. Many of the diplomas, however, published by the Benedictines, are only copies; for Louis-le-Debonnaire authorised several abbeys to write out afresh their charters, though some real original diplomas unquestionably exist. Such is that of Clovis to the abbey

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* Touron. Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. D. i. 5.

† Oliver, Historic Collections relating to the Monasteries of Devon.

of St. Denis on papyrus, so carefully preserved in the treasury of that abbey, and but rarely shown. On this is the signature of Eligius, St. Eloy, in great Roman characters. Muratori, speaking of the eleventh century, remarks a laudable custom of those rude ages, as he terms them, when any doubt existed as to the authenticity of a charter; an accurate examination of it was instituted by the judges. The form of character—the date—the signs—were all considered; and if the diploma were proved to be a forgery, it was cut with a knife to prevent it from being ever again used *.

But the most interesting objects preserved in the treasuries of abbeys were undoubtedly the vestments, chalices, or books which had belonged to the eminent saints who had either lived or occasionally resided within their walls.

In the abbey of Bobbio one saw the coffin, the chalice, the holy staff, and the missal of St. Columban, its founder; in the abbey of St. Gall, before the heretics plundered it in the fifteenth century, the bones of St. Gall and of Constance; in the abbey of Einsiedelin those of St. Othmar and St. Notker, which had been removed thither by the monks, to escape destruction, in the night between the 23rd and 24th of February.

"In the abbey of Stavelo," says Dom Martene, "we saw in the treasury the chasuble, stole, manipule, sandals, cowl, and comb of St. Remacle, whose body is here enshrined. I was greatly moved at seeing his cowl. It is of coarse stuff, brown, and all patched. It was the habit of a man who appeared with such eclat in the court of our kings, and who renounced his see to live in penance in this solitude. The form is that of the ancient chasubles, covering the whole body, and without sleeves. It is the most precious monument of antiquity of the kind that we possess †."

In the convent of Chelle, on the Marne, he saw the chalice of St. Eloy, which was nearly half a foot deep, and the same in diameter. In the abbey of Clairvaux he said mass with the chalice of St. Bernard and with that of St. Malachy, both of them small, not half a foot in height, but the cup is large, though shallow. "On St. Edmond's day," he says, "I said mass under the shrine of the saint in the abbey of Pontigni, with his chasuble,

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* Antiquit. It. Dissert. v.

† Voyage Lit. ii.

which is wholly round at bottom. I had the consolation also to see his sacred body, which God has preserved without corruption. His head is bare, and he is clothed in his pontifical habits. His body is white. In the treasury I saw also his pastoral ring, the chalice and paten with which he was buried, and also his goblet. Here also are shown the pontifical vestments of St. Thomas of Canterbury, and the chapel in which he used to pray, and where he had a revelation of his martyrdom." It was at Troyes that he saw the rochet of St. Thomas, of fine linen, in the form of a great tunic, on which were marks of his brains.

These bodies of saints constituted the most valued relics which monasteries possessed. These were the treasures which attracted the devout pilgrims from every side, who were drawn into these solitudes by the memory of some man of holy humility and austere penance. Indeed, so great did this attraction prove, that many abbots and monks were unwilling that their monasteries should be so enriched, lest the concourse of pilgrims in consequence should disturb the tranquillity of their secluded life. St. Cuthbert, in his dying discourse to the monks who came to Farne Isle to visit him, said, "I would rather be buried in this island: and I think it would be even better for yourselves that I should rest here, because of the numbers who will claim sanctuary. Whatever I may be in myself, yet, as I shall be remembered as a servant of Christ, they will flock to my body; so that you will be compelled to intercede for them with the powerful of the earth, and will, consequently, be subject to much trouble on my account." It is a fact, that in many monasteries the monks were obliged to celebrate their office in a chapel separate from their great church, in consequence of the multitude that flocked to it through reverence for holy relics. Thus within the cloisters of St. Gall there was also St. Peter's chapel, in which the divine office was sung; for in the great church it would not have been possible, from the crowd of pilgrims to the shrine of St. Gall. The capitularies, from the year 794 to 789, at Frankfort, actually prescribe, that in all monasteries containing the body of a saint there should be built a chapel adjoining for the divine office *.

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* Ildefons, Von Arx Geschichte des S. Gall, i. 63.

"There is a devout house of our order," says the Carthusian Sutorus, "in the diocese of Mans, founded by the noble family of Alençon. Gaufrid of Mans, who lies buried there, shone with miracles, so that multitudes flocked to his tomb; and while I was in that monastery it was in consequence deliberated whether that blessed and canonized pontiff should not be transferred elsewhere *." The inconvenience must have been grievous when such a question could be discussed, seeing the immense value attached to such treasures.

Indeed the possession of these holy bodies was regarded as furnishing an additional incentive, to all who dwelt under the same roof, to be on their guard against any spirit that would derogate from the peace and sanctity of the monastic state. "Beware," says Petrarch to Brother James, the Augustinian friar of Padua, "how you forget or disgrace the glorious name of Augustin, and the sacred delights of the eremitical life of so many devout, religious men: but remember that under the same roof with you repose the venerable bones of that Augustin, and let his image be ever present to your imagination, and, as it were, a witness of all your actions and words, that you may fear in presence of such a witness to offend Christ the Lord, who is his and your master, as of us all †."

Any wilful misrepresentation as to the authenticity of particular relics was deemed a crime of the deepest dye. Speaking of an attempt at Ratisbon to claim the possession of relics which were elsewhere, the chronicles of St. Denis use this expression, "They forgot the fear of the Lord ‡."

Having, in the third book, explained the discipline of the Church in regard to this devotion, we need not delay now to hear the cavils or the sneers of the wrong-headed men who systematically oppose the veneration which she pays them. "I could never understand," says Michelet, "the disdain of the Protestants for relics. These were great historical testimonies. In the abbey of St. Denis the history of France was thus related by relics. Here was a portion of the real cross, given to Philip Augustus by the Greek emperor when Constantinople was taken

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* Pet. Sut. de Vita Carthusiana, liv. ii. Tract. iii. c. 6.

† Epist. lib. x. 17.

‡ Ad an. 1050.

by the Crusaders. Here were relics of St. John the Baptist, given by the emperor Heraclius to Dagobert. Here were the head of St. Denis, the head of St. Hilary of Poictiers, the cross and sceptre of Charlemagne, the chalice used by Suger, that true founder of the Capetian monarchy, the crown and ring of St. Lewis, and a portion of his bones."

But it is wrong to speculate on the errors of these unhappy men in such a place. Let us fall upon our knees, and behold with reverence what is now to be unfolded. In the treasury of the abbey of Clairvaux, where most of the relics were presents from the emperors of Constantinople, Dom Martene was shown the skulls of St. Bernard and of St. Malachy. But only observe how rich in such holy treasures were once the English monasteries.

In Saxon histories there is a long catalogue of places in which the bodies of saints rest. Thus it says:—St. Augustin, who preached the faith to the English nation, rests in the church of St. Peter, in Canterbury, now the Augustins', with the holy bishops Laurence, Mellitus, Justus, Honorius; and in the church of Christ, within the walls, rest the holy archbishops Dunstan, Odo, Ethelgar, and Elphegus; in Rochester rests St. Paulinus, archbishop of York; in London, St. Erconwald and St. Theodred; in Abingdon, St. Vincentius; in Winchester, in the old monastery, St. Swithin, and St. Ethelwald, and St. Birinus, and St. Hedda, and St. Birstan, bishops, and St. Justus, martyr; and in the new monastery, St. Grymbald, priest, and St. Judoc, confessor; in Teignmouth, St. Oswin, king; in Durham, St. Cuthbert, bishop; in Beverly, St. John, bishop, and Bretun, abbot; in Wynchelcumbe, St. Kenelm, martyr; in Derby, St. Alhmundus, martyr; in Lichfield, St. Cedda; in Sherburne, St. Wulsius, bishop; in Hereford, St. Egelbrith, king; in Malmesbury, St. Aldelm, bishop; in Tamworth, St. Edgitha; in Ramsey, St. Merewen and St. Ealfled, abbess, and queen, St. Baltilda; in Coventry, St. Osburga; in Ripon, St. Wylfrid, and St. Acca, and St. Egelsig; in Ely, St. Etheldritha, and St. Withburga, and St. Ermenilda, and St. Sexburga; in Oxford, St. Fretheswyth; in Ramsay, St. Yvo and St. Felix, bishops, and St. Ethelred and St. Ethelbrith, martyrs, and St. Egelfled, queen; in Thorney, St. Athulfus, and St. Firmin, St. Herefridus, bishops, and St. Bothulf, abbot, and St. Benedict, abbot of Weremouth, St. Tisse and Hune, priests, and St. Tancred and St. Torhred, hermits, and St. Tova, virgin; in Croyland, St. Guthlac, priest; in Shaftesbury, St. Edward, king and martyr, and St. Elgiva, queen; in Melrose, St. Drihthelm; in Thanet, St. Ermengytha.

"Hæc propter utilitatem legentium inseruimus," adds the historian, "ut qui aliquem sanctum adire voluerit, sciat quo eum requirat."

Of the zeal and ingenuity of the Crusaders in acquiring relics when Constantinople was taken in 1204 there are many curious details in the chronicles of the monasteries to which they gave them. Henry of Ulm, speaking of a particle of the cross which he has given to an abbey, says, "that it is the treasure above all earthly possessions the dearest to his heart."

The bare sight of these relics was acknowledged as a divine favour, with pious gratitude. Thus another exclaims, "Per omnia benedictus Deus qui mihi, servo suo licet indigno et fragili peccatori fere in senio jam existenti, divina pietas videre concessit *!" The chronicles of St. Denis, describing the Emperor Charles IV. visiting the relics of the abbey and of the holy chapel, say, that being unable to walk, he caused himself to be carried, with great pain and suffering, before the shrine; that he joined his hands and wept, and prayed long, and with great devotion; and then, supported on the arms of his attendants, approached and kissed it †. He declared to the university of Paris, that his chief object in visiting France was to behold these relics; and accordingly, the king intimated to the abbots whose houses he visited, that it was his desire to be received as a pilgrim come to venerate them. Of the relics which Abbot Martin sent to Pairis, Otho, of St. Blase, says, "these shed lustre upon all Germany and Alsace;" and Gunther says, "by the coming of these, all Throtonia began to be counted by men more glorious, and by God more happy ‡."

The monks of Fossa Nuova, though Cistercians, would not have consented that the body of St. Thomas, who had died there, should be translated to the convent of his

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* Rigord, c. 48. † Ad an. 1378. ‡ Ap. Hurter, 25.

order in Toulouse, if it had not been in consideration that the relics of St. Dominick, the apostle of the south of France, were in Italy, at Bologna. It being resolved secretly to remove the body of St. John of the Cross from Ubede, where he died, to Segovia, an officer of the court arrived by night at the monastery, and, having desired an audience of the father prior, for a matter of the greatest consequence, he intimated to him the order of which he was the bearer; by which he was enjoined, on pain of excommunication, to take up the body secretly, without apprising any one of what was to be done. This was an unexpected blow to the prior. Nevertheless, to obey the first superior, he took the necessary measures; so that, when every one in the monastery was asleep, he went down into the church, accompanied by the officer and two monks, whom he had bound over to secrecy under the same penalty as that under which he lay himself, and, when all was arranged, they opened the grave. The saint had been dead a year; but, lo! the body was still perfect, and the flesh undecayed. As his bones only were demanded, the prior concluded that it was impossible to effect the object intended, at that time; so, having covered the body with quicklime, they placed it again in the grave, and sent back the officer to report what had been done. After nine months he returned; and, with the same precautions as before, the grave was opened, and the body, which was still perfect, being only dried up by the lime, was placed in a leather case, and committed to him. This man left the monastery about midnight; and, it is said, that strange visions were seen by many the same hour. One monk was so impressed with a conviction of what was passing, that he left his cell and came down to the church; but he found the prior standing at the door, who refused to let him enter, and desired him to return to his cell, and bury his suspicions within his bosom. The officer, who bore the body to Segovia, declared, that, after leaving Ubede, while passing the desert mountain, he heard many voices, which he thought could not be human, and that he was greatly terrified *.

When Heloise wrote to Peter the Venerable, requesting that the body of Abelard might be interred in her convent, according to his own desire, long before intimated,

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* Vie par le P. Dosithée, lib. viii.

the monks of Cluny, who had seen the sanctity and fervour of his last years, esteemed it so valuable a treasure, that they would have opposed their abbot if they had suspected that he would comply. Peter, therefore, promised to grant her request; but on condition of her keeping his intention secret, and leaving the choice of the time to him, as it was an affair of difficulty. The summer and autumn passed; but, some days after All Saints, the abbot of Cluny went to the priory of St. Marcel, on pretence of making the usual visit; and then, one night, while the monks reposed, he caused the body of Abelard to be raised up, and immediately set off with it, and arrived at Paraclet on the sixteenth of November. But who can describe the joy and the sorrow of Heloise, when she heard the lugubrious chants of the choir on the entrance of the body into the church? The abbot of Cluny sung high mass: after which he made a pathetic exhortation; and then the body was placed in the vault, half of which was without the sanctuary, and half in the nun's choir. The abbot left the convent full of holy affection for Heloise and for the community, which he associated in a spiritual society with Cluny. After this solemnity no more is heard of Heloise. The pen falling from her hand, she writes no more letters, but passes the remaining twenty-two years of her life in the exercise of penitence, and in the wise and holy government of Paraclet, which became under her the ornament of the Church in France, and an example to all the monasteries of the age.

With respect to the material value associated with these relics, it will be sufficient to observe, that these were contained in shrines or reliquaries which were often prodigies of art. Dom Bouillart, in his history of the abbey of St. Germain-du-Près, has given engravings to represent the form of some of the most ancient that were in the treasury of that abbey. The body of St. Brigit, at Kildare, was overhung with gold and silver crowns; and the relics of St. Columba, which the abbot of Iona removed for safety to Ireland in 830, are stated to have been enclosed in a shrine of gold. But the monk, with an angelic smile, waves us on: lo! it is the church we are entering.

CHAPTER VIII.

"DOMINE, qui operati sunt justitiam, habitabunt in tabernaculo tuo, et requiescent in monte sancto tuo." How solemn are these first sounds, and what joyful fervency is excited at the spectacle which presents itself! The churches of the monasteries have never a neglected air, as if those who served them had forgotten that care about minutiæ is the peculiar mark of an intense and reverent affection. The monks deemed that "there could be no nobler task for a rational being than that of providing, with the most punctilious exactness, for the due celebration of the Creator's worship; and no worthier dedication of the offerings of nature, and the devices of art, all alike his gift, than in the adorning of his earthly dwelling-place." No tepidity penetrates, as an atmosphere, into their churches! No cold, dead, formal sounds, falling on the ear more monotonous than the drop of rain in the pool of a grotto, indicate a substitution there of custom, void of soul, for religious fervour and active zeal, ministering to the desires of the interior life! "The variety of holy observances dispels weariness and apathy," says St. Bernard, alluding to the offices in the abbey of St. Denis, after the conversion of Suger, which had led to the reform of the whole community *. The words which I read in the abbey church of Einsiedelin,—"Verè Dominus est in isto loco,"—seem only to express what is uppermost on the tongue of all who enter the church of a religious order. What is also singularly striking in them is that profound silence, that extraordinary respect, observed. Nothing can be more impressive than to see the community assembled,—that profound recollection; those kisses of peace; those low salutations, which the monks make to each other; that general prostration; those foreheads in the dust, when the bell announces the opening of the door of the tabernacle in which the Lamb without spot reposes:—all that produces a great effect, and speaks a language to the soul which it understands, and seldom hears elsewhere.

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* St. Bern. Epist. 78.

"Incidence to be noted," says the chronicler of St. Denis: "it happened, at this time, that a man who had quite lost his senses returned to a right memory in the church of this abbey *." Rightly, he does not affirm it a miracle, but an incidence. In effect, to account for it by secondary causes would not be impossible. It was not unprecedented either. In the chronicle of Mount Casino we read that a mad woman, who used to wander through mountains and valleys, woods and fields, by day and by night, never resting except when compelled by exhaustion, coming one day to the oratory of St. Benedict, was from that hour restored to a sane mind †. What strikes one so in these monastic churches,—what soothes and inspires such delicious calm,—was, not the material, but the living, temple; not the vista of arches and columns, but the man of the cowl adoring. While in the monastic churches it must be remembered, that all which was visible was only a type and shadow of what really existed within the minds of the men who served them. The soul of the monk was the interior temple, of which the visible was only a material development.

After the solemn consecration of the church of the monastery of Cava, by Pope Urban II., on the fifth of September, in 1092, in presence of Duke Roger, and all the people of Salerno,—of which there is such a splendid and curious account in Muratori,—the pomp being finished, the pontiff, with the cardinals and Duke Roger, returned to the cloister; and then, having assembled all the monks, the pope spoke to them as follows:—

"Vidistis dilectissimi—You have seen, my beloved, how many sacred unctions, how many ceremonial rites, and how many prayers we used, while this house, by the ministry of our humility, was dedicated to the Lord: all which things, without doubt, were done for your sake, and for the sake of all who are to come after you, to the end of time; in whom will be spiritually fulfilled the things which this day have been foreshadowed on these walls: for what has now been done in the visible house, Jesus Christ daily works in the souls of the faithful. For these are known to be truly and really the temples of the Holy Ghost. You, O my sons! are the temple of the living God; as the Apostle said, 'The temple of God is

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* Ad an. 1193.

† Chron. Cas. 38.

holy, which you are.' Consider therefore in your minds, brethren, how great is the dignity of a devout monk, whom God hath led from the boisterous waves of the world into the calm port of religion, that the eye of his mind being purged by the monastic discipline, he may the more easily perceive how all human things are narrow, mortal, and full of error and of vanity; and, although still on earth, he is nevertheless celestial, and already, in a certain manner, associated with the blessed. For these are the true ornaments, these are the admirable insignia, of monks. Therefore hold fast what you possess, that no one may take away your crown; and, dearest brethren, since you cannot in the way of authority, at least by your prayers, assist us to bear our burden, and condole with us with the affection of piety."

Then the brethren having been admitted to kiss his feet, the Serene Duke, and all who had accompanied him, returned to Salerno[*].

Monks were men of prayer; and perhaps that is to include all in one word. "Consider," says St. Thomas, "what a felicity is granted to you in prayer, to speak with God, to engage in conversation with Christ, to choose what you wish, and to ask what you desire[†]." With all this, we must take into account the saintly and impressive looks of the monks and friars, the solemn historical recollections awakened by the sight of their holy habit; the effect produced by observing them pass, now seen, now lost, as they glide under arched cloisters to or from the interior of the convent; and the feeling which arises from it, that one is thus admitted to catch a glimpse of the domestic life of the meek men of God, who think upon the ancient days, and have in mind the eternal years; who meditate by night with their heart, and exercise and search their spirit. All this acted powerfully on the imagination. The pavement of these churches was thought to burn under the feet of evil men, if they dared to enter them[‡].

The annals of Corby, in Saxony, relate, under the date of 1415, that Justin Strober, a devout rustic among the peasants of Stahl, would never enter the church unless barefooted, through reverence for the holy place *. Donizo, the Benedictine, says, that one day the great Boniface, duke of Tuscany, came to the abbey of Pomposa; and, when assisting at the divine office, from a lofty tribune, though not with a proud heart, looking on the choir, he saw the faces of all the boys fixed down upon the ground, while sweetly singing the Hours; and having asked why they stood so immoveable, he was told by the monks that they always stood so: then he gave secret orders that some one should go on the roof of the church, and throw down pieces of money. And, lo! when ten livres fell with a great noise upon the pavement, in the midst of the choir, the eyelids of the boys were never raised, and no one stirred to touch the money †.

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[*] Rer. It. Script. tom. vi.

[†] ii. 2. 9. 83. a. 2 ad 3.

[‡] Cæsar. Heist. Illust. Mirac. xi. 54.

When Othgar the Paladin, that glorious hero and friend of Charlemagne, had resolved upon leaving the world and embracing a religious life, he made a journey, for the purpose of visiting, as a strange pilgrim, various monasteries, in order that he might judge with his own eyes where the regular discipline was best observed. For this purpose he procured a staff, to which were attached many little thongs of leather, and at the end of each thong was an iron ball, which he used to let fall with violence upon the pavement of whatever monastery he entered; artfully and diligently remarking whether the monks, at the sound of this staff, would lightly turn round through vanity of mind. Having in this manner visited many monasteries, he found, it is said, no where such absence of vanity as in that of St. Faro: for there, when he had dashed the appendages of his staff upon the pavement, and made a prodigious noise, not one of the monks moved, or turned round to see what was the matter, with a mind recalled from the intention of devotion, excepting one boy, who was shortly after struck with the wand of discipline, and made to return with his eyes from that distraction. The behaviour of this society appeared the most strict; and there accordingly he assumed the habit of a monk, where he lived in great sanctity till his death. His tomb, of which Mabillon gives

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* Ap. Leibnitz Script. Bruns. Illust.

† Vita Mathildis, lib. 1. c. 14. ap. Murator. Rer. Italic. Script. v.

an engraving, was one of the greatest curiosities in that monastery [*].

Nothing could exceed the magnificence of the monastic churches in the middle ages. We have already remarked the prodigious scale on which many of them were built. No less striking was the elegance of their architecture. The pillars in the church of the abbey of Lobbe, in the country of Liege, were so slender, that the Duke of Alba, coming there, did not dare to enter the church, lest the vault should fall on him, and exclaimed, "this will be the monks' tomb [†]!" Dagobert I. covered that of the abbey of St. Denis, on the outside, with fine silver, as the chronicles record [‡]. What must have been its brightness within? The riches of the church of this abbey, the splendour of its altars, the beauty of its paintings and mosaics, are all described in detail by the Abbot Suger. Desiderius, the Abbot of Mount Casino, brought over artists from Constantinople to adorn the church of that abbey with precious mosaics, tessellated pavement, stained glass, and paintings; besides which, the man of all prudence caused the boys of the monastery to be taught by these artists, in order that the art should never afterwards be lost in Italy [§]. In the twenty-fourth dissertation of Muratori on the Antiquities of Italy, many details may be found on this subject; but one cannot open any monastic chronicle without meeting with striking instances. The annals of Corby, in Saxony, under the date of 1330, record that John de Steinburg gave to that abbey figures of the twelve Apostles, as large as life [||]. Images of this kind were often of solid silver. "In the church," says St. Bernard, "are not only crowns, but wheels, studded with jewels, and surrounded with lamps, shining no less with precious stones than with their lights. For candelabras we see immense trees of brass, fabricated with wondrous art, and not shining more with lights than with the jewels set in them. The pavement is full of images of saints and angels, and inlaid with beautiful colours. Perhaps this is well, according to the prophet, 'Domine, dilexi decorem domus tuæ.' We may suffer this in the church, because, although they are injurious to the vain and avaricious, they are harmless to the simple and devout[*].”

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[*] Acta S. Ord. Benedict. sæcul. iv. pars i.

[†] Voyage Lit. de Deux Bénéd.

[‡] Liv. v. c. 9.

[§] Chronic. S. Monast. Casinens. lib. iii. c. 29.

[||] Ap. Leibnitz.

We read that Immo, Abbot of St. Gall, began, and nearly finished the golden tablet which is before the altar of St. Gall, which is more precious for the art employed in it than for the materials[†].” The walls of this abbey church were painted and inlaid with gold. The high altar was covered with gold, and ten other altars were of silver. The splendour with which the divine worship was celebrated in monasteries corresponded to this magnificence. We read of the same abbot, that he also made the chasubles, in one of which our Lord’s ascension is wrought in gold, and in another is woven with divine images. Similarly he provided the golden stoles and dalmatics, and other ecclesiastical ornaments, finished with such subtle skill; and so many other things he did, that there is no prince in the world in our age who in so short a time could accomplish so many magnificent works. “Whence,” demands Burkhard, “could he have such a weight of gold, so many pearls, such precious purple, so many subtle workmen[‡]?” One remonstrance in the abbey of Einsiedelin contained 2,911 pearls, 595 diamonds, 38 saphires, 154 emeralds, 857 carbuncles, 26 hyacinths, and 19 amethysts. It was of solid gold, and eleven years of work were required to make it[§]. In the ninth and tenth centuries nothing was spared to add grandeur to the divine worship in St. Gall. The same attention was paid to it in the abbey of St. Denis, after it had embraced the reform under Suger. On certain festivals sixty great wax candles used to be lighted round the high altar. In the abbey of Einsiedelin, before the holy chapel, sixteen enormous wax tapers, weighing ninety pounds each, used to burn day and night, at the expense of the Swiss cantons. Dagobert the First had established a rent of 100 livres for the lights of the abbey of St. Denis, to be furnished with the best oil from Marseilles; and Pepin added a privilege that the six carts which were to convey it were to be exempt from all toll the whole way from that city to the abbey *. Roger, Earl of Shrewsbury, gave to the monks of Ouches every year at the beginning of Lent, 100 livres from his revenue of Alençon, for lights day and night in their church, before the figure of our Lord upon the cross †. And there was no monastery to which donations were not made for supporting the lamp,—that lamp, " whose narrow fire is shaken by the wind, and on whose edge devouring darkness hovers,—that small flame, which as a dying pulse rises and falls, still flickering up and down, was emblematic of our life, which even now thus wastes and sinks." The churches generally were brilliantly lighted in the time of Charlemagne. Aldric, Bishop of Mans, ordained that every night there should burn in the elder church three lights of oil and one of wax, from vespers till sunrise; that during nocturns there should burn ten of oil and five of wax; but on Sundays and minor festivals, thirty of oil and five of wax should burn through the night, and on the greater festivals this number was to be tripled ‡. In adorning their churches with such magnificence the monks acted not without deep thoughts. " Let each one abound in his own sense," says Suger, " but I confess what most pleases me is, that whatever is most dear and precious ought above all to be made subservient to the administration of the thrice holy Eucharist. Some oppose to us, that it suffices to bring to this administration a holy mind and a pure soul, and a faithful intention. And we also indeed hold that these are especially required. But we profess also, that on nothing so much as on this holy sacrifice ought all external nobleness to wait in conjunction with all interior purity; for in all things universally ought we decently to serve our Redeemer, who in all things universally, without exception, did not refuse to provide somewhat for us, who united under one admirable individual, our nature with his own, who promised that placing us on his right hand, He would grant us to possess his kingdom, who liveth and reigneth our Lord through all the ages of ages §. Dom Gervaise, Abbot of

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[*] S. Bern. Apolog. ad Guillel. c. xii.

[†] Burkhard de Casibus S. Galli, cap. i.

[‡] Id. cap. i.

[§] Regnier, Chronique d’Eins. 78.

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* Chroniques de St. Denis, v. 9. † Ord. Vit. v.

‡ Gesta Aldrici ap. Baluze Miscellan. tom. i.

§ Sug. Abb. lib. de rebus in administratione sua gestis, ap. Duchesne, iv.

La Trappe, praising Suger for the holy magnificence with which divine worship was celebrated in his abbey, adds, "I know indeed that St. Bernard declaimed against the splendour of ornaments in churches, and wished that men might be content with bringing a pure heart; but neither am I ignorant that all the saints were not of his opinion, as may be witnessed in St. Chrysostom *." If one can seek in these things to please his own vanity, one can also have a design to honour God; and it was with this intention that Suger spared no expense in providing for the pomp of worship. His own cell was as poor as those of the other monks; it had neither tapestry nor curtains, and he slept upon straw: he used no carriage or litter, but always travelled on horseback, even in his extreme old age. His table had all the simplicity of a monastic board, and two persons always sat with him when he dined †.

In some monasteries there were three distinct choirs of 100 monks each, with children, which succeeded each other in singing the divine praises. So that there was a perpetual psalmody night and day ‡. This was the case in the abbey of St. Medard at Soissons, founded by Clotaire I. in 557, one of the most celebrated abbeys in the world, illustrious for the learning of its monks and the multitude of its saints, most of them of noble, and some of royal blood. Organs, which came into France first in 757 §, and which some orders, as the Theatines, persisted in rejecting, were often built in the monasteries. Cardinal Bona says that the Cistercian abbeys were celebrated for the grandeur of the divine music which resounded in their churches night and day. The offices were celebrated in them with such solemnity and devotion, that it seemed as if one heard there the voice of Angels ||. Men versed in liturgical antiquities were pleased with certain peculiar customs, vestiges of early times, which were found in the celebration of divine worship, in religious orders, as in the Carthusians and Dominicans, and in particular monasteries, as in that of

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* Hom. 81, in Mat.

† Hist. de Suger, liv. vi.

‡ Gerbert de Cantu Sacra.

§ Chronic. Quedlinburgense ap. Leibnitz, Script. Brunsv. Illust. iii.

|| De Divin. Psal. 451.

St. Martin of Tours. Thus in the abbey of St. Denis there were practices observed since the time of the Merovingians. Such as the anthem Ante Evangelium, and that Venite Populi before the communion of the people: on certain festivals the communion was given in two kinds, by means of a tube, and the mass was sung in Greek *. In the abbey of St. Gall, also, on certain days, the Gloria, Credo, and Pater used to be sung in Greek, of which the notes in music are still preserved; and in that of Paraclet mass had been sung in Greek on the feast of Pentecost, from the time of Heloissa. One of the rules of the Capuchins was, that in towns or cities where seculars can flow into churches to hear the divine office, on the three days of holy week matins should be sung not in the evening, but at midnight, according to the custom of the ancient Fathers †. It was the custom at Cluny for the priest who said mass at the high altar to administer the holy communion under the two kinds to the deacon and subdeacon and two ministers, who served ‡. The Carthusians, instead of merely kneeling, prostrated themselves on the ground and kissed it, at the Homo factus est §. In the abbey of Mount Casino, as in the basilica of St. Paul at Rome, there were certain tones of the chant which differed from the Gregorian ||. In the abbey of St. Gall the choral song was singularly solemn. It rose high and then sank into depth, unlike that in other places, which was more uniform ¶. The proses or sequences used in this abbey before the Gospel were sung through all Europe. The hymns peculiar to some houses, in honour of their respective patrons, used to please also by the strangeness of their tone, "not cheerful, nor yet sad, some dull old thing, some outworn and unused monotony, such as the country matrons catching from them sing and spin till they almost forget they live." But what chiefly charmed those who had minds susceptible of the sublime in this order was the solemnity and religious reverence with which the divine

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* Le Bœuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, iii. 198.

† Constit. of the first Gen. Congregation in 1529.

‡ Chronic. Cluniacens.

§ Pet. Sutorus de Vita Carthusiana, ii. iv. 5.

|| Gerbert de Cantu Sacra.

¶ Ildefons Von Arx.

office was celebrated in all religious houses. In monasteries the tone of voice, the time, every thing was regulated by a general sense of what was best, from which no one was permitted to deviate. St. Jerome says that a man loses dignity, who, on account of an immoderate and indiscreet mode of singing the divine office, incurs a charge of madness or of gloominess. St. Benedict in his rule desires that morose tediousness should be avoided; and William of Paris and Gerson both command that wearisome and dismal prolongations should be repressed, and that spiritual hilarity should be observed. Such attention was paid to the music of the choir, that frequent notices occur in ancient books of circumstances relating to it. "I have heard," says Cæsar of Heisterbach, "that there was a certain monk in Mount Casino, who had so sweet a voice, that when on the vigil of Easter he blessed the paschal candle, the dulcet tones of that benediction resounded in the ears of all as a celestial melody *." The truth is, that the divine offices in general could never be sung with such effect as in these regular communities, in which they were loved and studied, and understood profoundly. That deep meditation of the monks and devout sisters on the prayers must have produced great effects in the celebration of external worship. St. Theresa says of that of our Lord, "When I have finished it I can proceed no farther. This comprises all consolations; this conveys a solid instruction for the mind, and a great remedy for all the troubles of the heart †." It was in monasteries that the affecting symbols of the Catholic Liturgy were most fully appreciated. Poujoulat speaks of his seeing an old monk weeping when the prior came to wash his feet with the rest on Maunday Thursday. The reason of course was, that he saw Christ in his superior. We find that when monks used to be presented to eminent saints, who were supposed to obtain from God whatever they prayed for, what they used to beg on these occasions might be demanded for them was the gift of tears in the church; one would desire that he might always weep during mass; another at the solemn vigils of the second and fifth Feria and on the Sabbath ‡. When travelling

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* Illust. Mirac. lib. iv. c. 8.

† The Road of Perfection, 42.

‡ Cæs. Heist. Illust. Mirac. ii. c. 22.

and in strange churches monks were to observe the same demeanour as others, for those who have only one heart and one soul ought not to appear dissimilar externally *. The devout, reverential step of hooded men and their profound genuflections in their churches, were actually so many acts of faith—the result of a deep and practical conviction of the respect which God requires us to pay externally, as well as internally, to the mysteries or the symbols of religion. Let us hear a narrative of Cæsar of Heisterbach to illustrate this remark. "In the abbey of Hemmenrode was a certain convertite, a native of Cologne, by name Liffard, an humble, meek man, whose office it was to tend the swine of the monastery. Towards the end of his life, as Lord Hermann, then abbot, related to me, he was tempted by the spirit of pride; for he began to say to himself, 'What am I doing here? I am well born, but on account of this vile office, despised by all my friends. I will not stay here any longer.' So he resolved to leave the monastery next day. But that night, as he watched in his bed, there appeared to him a venerable person, who made signs that he should follow him. He rose up, took his shoes and followed to the door of the dormitory, which opened of itself. Thence they past to the door of the church, which in like manner opened to them. The figure moved up the choir of the convertites; he followed, and as they past by the altar of St. John the Baptist, made a profound inclination. The other, who went first, said then, 'You have done well to bow reverently.' Then coming to the south door of the church, which leads into the cloister, they found it also open, as well as that which leads to the cemetery, all which are regularly locked every night. On their entering the cemetery the graves of the dead were all open, and the figure leading him to that of a man who had recently died, stopped and said, 'Do you mark this man? You will soon be like him. Now, whither do you wish to go?' Then as he was about to lead him to other putrid bodies, the convertite cried out, 'Spare me, Lord, spare me; for I cannot bear the sight.' Then replied the other, 'Why through pride will you desert the port of salvation?

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* St. Bonaventura Speculum Novitiorum, c. 30.

Promise to me on this spot that you will remain;' and he promised him. Then the graves closed, and they returned, each door shutting after them as they went through, and on passing before the same altar, he again humbled himself as before, and then felt an interior conviction how that first act of humility had endeared him to God; and entering the dormitory, the door shut of itself after them, and when he lay down again on his bed, the figure vanished, and from that hour the temptation left him *."

Hugo of St. Victor explains why in the diurnal and nocturnal offices the names of authors are not pronounced as they are at mass, by saying "that herdsmen and workmen who assist at the latter would not know who wrote these passages, if they were not told; whereas clerks and domestics of the church know who are the authors, from having often heard them." The monks loved the divine employment of the choir; and what is loved is well done. Cardinal Bona mentions a monk of the Cistercian order, who from ill health had leave from his abbot to absent himself from matins; yet he hardly ever availed himself of the liberty. Being asked why he exposed himself unnecessarily, "I cannot do otherwise," he replied, "for remembering the consolation I experience in my soul during the divine office, I am pained to the last degree not to be present in the church where Angels and Jesus Christ himself are present with the children of men †."

When Laurentius Ferrarus, Abbot of St. Martin's at Palermo, used to hear the bells for the divine office,—"Let us go, brethren, joyfully," said he, "to recreate our minds ‡." "While suffering under my severe master at school," says Guibert de Nogent, "I did not try to avoid the ecclesiastical office; nay, when the hour came, I did not even prefer my supper to it §."

When Gobert, of the abbey of Villiers, was travelling and singing the office with his companion, the barking of some dogs would induce him to break off until they had passed, that he might lose nothing of the harmony of the sacred chant; for though he was only a lay brother

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* Illust. Mir. iv. 4.

† De Divin. Psal. 521.

‡ Sicilia Sacra, ii. 1082.

§ Guib. Abb. de Novigento de Vita Sua, lib. i. c. 6.

without clerical knowledge, the mere sound of the holy words filled his heart with sweetness *.

Monks used often to remain in the church during the night, even while there was no office. In the decretals of Lanfranc, referring to the season from October to Advent, we read "that the prior at midnight, before matins, is to go through the church with a dark lantern lest any one should be asleep there, and that if any one is praying, he is to pass him by in silence." We read in the chronicle of Melrose, at the date of 1259, that there was a monk in that abbey who for twenty years was never known to use his bed; he slept before the altars. Even in the winter he used to spend a great part of the night in playing sacred melodies on the harp in honour of the blessed Virgin. By day, while reading the Psalter, he used to sit near the door of the church with a basket of bread; and no poor person departed without having something to carry away from it †.

Suger always went to matins when he was at St. Denis; and when affairs of state called him to the court, or when he was travelling, he used to rise by night to say them at the same hour as he would have risen if he had been in the abbey ‡. Dom Martene, on occasion of his visit to Clairvaux, remarks that the abbot, in his 80th year, assists at nearly all the offices, and rises constantly at two o'clock for matins. He retires to rest at ten, having eaten but one meal in the day, and drank no wine.

How interesting is it to find the great St. Bernard, whose counsels directed kings, whose pen guided the Christians of the east as well as of the west, explaining to a monk of Clairvaux why he had not replied to his letters on receiving them, by saying, that he was occupied in the celebration of the divine festival. "Your letters came to my hands on Christmas-day, when the solemnity of course did not permit me to think of any thing else §." Similarly he apologises to Oger, a canon regular, for replying to him in a very short letter, on the ground of its being the season of Lent. "There is a time for silence," said the wise man; "but what time will have its silence if confabulation is to claim for itself even the sacred days

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* Hist. Monast. Villar. lib. ii. ap. Martene, Thes. Anec. iii.

† Chronic. de Mailros. Rer. Anglic. Script. i.

‡ Hist. de Suger, lib. vi.

§ Epist. 86.

of Lent? When we cannot even speak to the present what we wish, can we dictate to the absent? but while I dictate or write, what leisure or silence can I have? But you say I can do all this in silence? You cannot say so seriously, for what a tumult is in the mind of the dictator when a multitude of sentences resounds, where a variety of words and diversity of senses concur, where often what occurs is rejected, and that which vanishes is required; when it is considered what is the best expression, the most consequent sentence, the most clear, the most useful, what is to come first, what last, and other things of the same kind? And do you tell me that this is quiet? and, because the tongue is silent, will you call this silence*?" All that dramatic interest, therefore, attached to the festivals, of which we spoke in the fifth book, was felt in monasteries in the highest perfection, where it was the desire of every one to co-operate, in the deepest recesses of his soul, with the intentions of the church.

The secular clergy, who in a certain sense must move with the world, seem obliged sometimes to give up things of venerable and of useful observance, through compliance with the manners around them. If the public becomes too dissipated, or too much occupied with the world, to have leisure for assisting at the divine offices, these offices in the churches of the secular are either suppressed; (and whatever councils or synods may say†, requiring that the whole Paschal week, and the second, third, and fourth ferias after Pentecost should be celebrated with pomp as the chief day, all these great anniversaries are reduced to little more than an ordinary observance,) or else, as we see recommended in publications styled Catholic, they are to be changed and stript of their ancient universal character‡; so that, in fine, to a certain extent, the result of their acquiescence amounts to an interdict, which comes to be considered an indulgence.

But the monks had no occasion for such sacrifices: whether people of the world chose to be pious or indifferent, their churches resounded with the praises of God and the holy circle of ecclesiastical rites was maintained in all its sublime order, unmaimed and unadulterated. The monks, not content with faithfully celebrating in their own immediate church, even made foundations to provide for the solemn rites of the divine office, wherever their influence extended. There was a priory at Aunay belonging to the abbey of Cluny, in which were to be always two monks along with the prior, who were to say mass there daily, and to sing vespers with notes every day *.

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* Epist. 89.

† Synodus Ingilenhemens. ap. Caniss. Lect. Antiq.

‡ Cath. Mag. No. 38. 1840.

The monks would not suspend their offices through any human motive. They had no parties of pleasure to arrange at certain periods of the year, which they preferred to the commemoration of an apostle. Not even the destruction of their monastery would cause an interruption to their psalmody. Ingulphus relates, that at daybreak, the morning after the fatal night in which the abbey of Crowland was burnt, the monks performed their office with a lugubrious voice in the hall of Grimketulus, the corrodiarius of the abbey; and not till afterwards did they proceed to examine the smoking ruins, where the fire was not even then extinguished †. And let it be observed, that this constancy was the result as much of private inclination as of strictness of discipline. Thus, during the interdict in 1199, occasioned by the conduct of Philip Augustus to Ingelberge, the Prior of St. John-des-Vignes at Soissons, and three of his monks, afflicted at the silence in their church, left the city on the day of the Assumption, and proceeded to a neighbouring mountain, where there had been formerly a hermit. In that desert place they sung vespers, and after a frugal repast took repose till midnight, when they rose to sing matins, during which it was said they were consoled by a choir of Angels ‡. Even in death the desire of the monks always appeared to be to continue their holy song on earth to the last moment, before departing to the world, where it was to resound for ever. St. John of the Cross, dying in the convent of Ubede, after receiving extreme unction at eight o'clock in the evening, requested the father provincial, and the other monks who wished to remain with him, to retire and take some repose, telling them that he would send for them in time. After the community had retired, he remained, kissing the crucifix and murmuring words of love till nine o'clock, when he

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* Bibliotheca Cluniacensis, 1716.

† 77.

‡ Hist. de Soissons, ii. 67.

asked the hour; and the infirmarian having told him, he said, "We shall depart hence to say matins in heaven at midnight." Then, after reciting many psalms, and hearing some chapters read from the book of Canticles, he continued to ask repeatedly what the hour was, and when it was half-past eleven he begged that the community might be summoned, and then responded to the prayers in recommendation of his soul. As soon as the clock had struck midnight a monk left the room to sound the bell. Opening his eyes at the sound he asked what it was, and when they told him that it was the bell for matins, "Glory to God," he exclaimed. Then having looked round on all present, he put his mouth to the feet of the crucifix, and said, "In manus tuas, Domine, commendo spiritum meum," and the same instant expired, as if he fell into a sweet sleep. This was on the 14th of December, 1591, in the forty-ninth year of his age and the twenty-eighth of his profession *. How sublime was this undeviating course of the regular hours, which nothing could interrupt; not even the holy spectacle declared to be precious in the sight of God, of a death-scene such as this! No wonder that the bell of the monastery, which announced their celebration, should awaken such emotions in all who heard it from afar. Methinks these details will even give an additional interest to that allusion to it by the poet, who describes the ride of Sir William of Deloraine,

"When Hawick he pass'd, had curfew rung,
Now midnight lauds were in Melrose sung."

When the fleet of French paladins, under Philip Augustus, bound for Palestine, encountered the dreadful storm in the straits of Messina, after the horses and provisions had been thrown ever board, the wind and thunder seeming to grow more terrible, all hopes of safety were beginning to vanish; but after midnight the king consoled the men, saying, "Cease your fears: already the brethren of Clairvaux are risen to matins. The saints, who do not forget us, are reciting their holy service in honour of Christ. Their prayers will deliver us from this great peril." As he spoke the tumult of the atmosphere subsided—the fury of the wind was appeased, the

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* Dosithée, viii.

moon and stars again appeared, and the sea grew calm *.

We may observe, in conclusion, that monks in the middle ages were not deficient in theological science to defend the wisdom of their discipline, in this respect, against the cavils of objectors. "The worship of the choir," says the annalist of the Capuchins, "is not a religion of indolent and ignorant men, as Wycliff and his peers imagine, but of divine men, such as the Athanasians, the Basils, the Cyrils, the Chrysostoms, the Cyprians, the Hilaries, the Ambroses, the Augustins. Heretics in every age have attacked it, while the Church has always pronounced blessed the nations in which it was observed." The benefit resulting from having these churches, or monasteries, at a short distance from their homes, was deeply appreciated by the people in ages of faith. "Near a monastery," was then the qualification to enhance the value of an estate; as now it is, "near a pack of hounds." The neighbourhood of St. Gall, or St. Denis, of Glastonbury, or St. Alban's, was then indeed desired on different grounds from what it would be now. At these places many felt their hearts opened, and their souls instantaneously enfranchised from all the servile bonds of this world. These were extraordinary instances, but no less admirable were the general results to the society around them.

The solemn and tender melodies of the church, by means of these institutions, gained access to those who, for want of them, would have degenerated, as we now see so many, from the dignity of their baptismal vocation; for music of this nature is a strengthener both of the mind and of the heart. If a modern philosopher doubts whether the admirable order of the Lacedæmonians was more owing to the laws of Lycurgus than to the elegies of Tyrtæus, we need not wonder that those who lived near monasteries should have imbibed so many holy and generous sentiments merely by singing the Gregorian chant with hooded men. Affection for the divine offices dictated a delicate solicitude for the wants of those who were employed in their celebration, of which we find many traces. Hence Charles the Bald founded in the abbey of St. Denis "fifteen tapers for

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* Philipeid. Guillaume le Breton, Cant. iv.

the refectory, to be placed on the tables in winter, because," as the chronicles observe, "the community sometimes goes very late to collation, from the service in the church not having been finished before night-fall *." "There was a poor man," says Cæsar of Heisterbach, "who had kept flocks in his youth, but in old age was obliged to beg at the door of our abbey church. He never would leave the church as long as there was any part of the divine office celebrating. Therefore he was loved by every one †." Indeed from an old complaint against the monks of Mount Casino, that "they mutilated their books in order to make psalters for the use of women and children," we may infer how well their offices were followed by the surrounding population. Three aged ladies lived close to the monastery of Bec. Their liberality to the convent was unbounded, and they received all kind attentions from the monks. Of the last who survived, we read that she continued her habits of devotion to the end, and in extreme weakness still assisted in the church daily. So deeply was the scene of her adorations impressed on her thoughts, that even when carried home and sitting by the fire, she still constantly thought herself in the church. In the annals of Corby we read that "about the middle of the fifteenth century Regina Salmsen and Veronica de Steinbrug were so devout, that neither cold, nor the night air, nor hunger, could ever drive them from the church of the abbey, but they lived in it constantly, to be objects of imitation to others ‡."

In the monastic churches, besides the regular offices, many devotions were observed, which endeared them to the people. Thus in the annals of Corby we read, under the date of 1402, that "the chapel of St. Gertrude is repaired, and it is commanded that every morning mass shall be celebrated for the sick in general, wherever they may be §." "In the abbeys of Ouches, Noyon, and in others, there was instituted," says Orderic Vitalis, "a solemn anniversary in favour of the fathers, mothers, brothers, and sisters of all the monks of the monastery. Their names were inserted in a long register, which is placed on the altar.

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* Chroniques de St. D. an. 877.

† Illust. Mirac. lib. vi. c. 33.

‡ Ad an. 1452.

§ Ap. Liebnitz, iii.

The same day the almoner received in the abbey as many poor people as there were monks, and gave them an entertainment; after which, the ceremony of the Mandatum was performed by all the religious *." The verses for the solemn procession of the relics of St. Gall describe the faithful crowd sweetly singing, bearing the blessed burden through hills and vales—

> " Scandens et descendens inter montium confinia,
> Silvarum scrutando loca, valliumque concava,
> Nullus expers ut locus sit istius solaminis,
> Jamque cœlum, jamque terra, jamque pontus laudibus
> Plaudat, atque circumquaque vox emissa plebibus
> Auctorem patremque tanta tamque clari luminis †."

The Benedictines of Einsiedelin, in their processions in the open air, use a portable organ to guide the voices of their choir. It was a custom then observed by all the inhabitants of the town, to wear long cloaks while in the church of the abbey, to which they used to hasten at all the regular hours, as if they were themselves monks. Indeed there are few of the ancient chronicles in which we do not find most remarkable testimony to the benefit resulting from the churches of the monasteries to the community at large. Let us hear what is recorded under the date of 1330 :—

" It is an ancient custom of the citizens of Pavia to visit often the thresholds of the saints. On the nativity of our Lord they proceed solemnly to the monastery of St. Saviour with musical instruments, tymbrels, and trumpets, and silk banners, with the chief magistrate at their head. Similarly on the festivals of St. Peter and of St Augustin they proceed to the monastery of St. Peter in Cœlo-aureo, and offer palliums, the multitude of which may be seen on these festivals when they are extended in the church. On the vigils of St. Peter and of St. Augustin, crowds from many parts of Lombardy pass the whole night in the church. In the monastery of St. Peter in Cœlo-aureo, where is the body of St. Augustin, there is, on every second feria of the year, a solemn sermon, at which nearly the whole city assists. On every third feria there is a sermon in the house of the hermits of St. Augustin. On the fourth, the sermon is

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* Lib. iii.

† Ap. Canis. Lect. Antiq. tom. ii.

in the church of the Dominicans. On the fifth, in that of the Carmelites. On the sixth, in the convent of the Minors; and on the Saturday in Lent alone it is again in the convent of the Dominicans. Besides these there are particular sermons occasionally in different holy places. And the crowds which attend them are so great, that one might suppose the people rarely heard the Word of God; and there is always at the end a general confession and benediction. On festivals, and every day in Lent, the sermons are more numerous. On Good Friday every one, from the least boy of the town to the most decrepit old person, repairs very early to the convent of the Minors to hear the sermons on the Passion. I am deceived if I have not seen such multitudes that the whole city remained deserted. There one witnesses tears and groans abundantly, and the whole day is spent in hearing sermons in different places. In a word, the men have as much devotion as the women. So that if there be some bad amongst us, the greatest numbers of the inhabitants are devout and intent on the Divine Word *." It is marked in a calendar of the fifteenth century, that on Good Friday, in the church of the Great Augustins at Paris, there is always, in different parts of the church, a sermon in Italian, German, and French †. At Durham we hear of the fair iron pulpit, from which one of the monks used to preach every day of devotion at one in the afternoon. Salomon, abbot of St. Gall, shortly before his death, on Whitsunday, preached four times to the people. There was hardly a city or town in all France in which a Franciscan theologian from Paris did not preach in Advent or Lent. There was hardly one convent of the order that did not furnish six, ten, or twelve devout preachers ‡; the force of which distinction may be conjectured from what St. Thomas says, that "it happens frequently that they who approach with hardened hearts, by means of the word of preaching, are kindled to the divine love §."

The churches of the monasteries possessed also a deep historical interest from the innumerable memorials which

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* Anon. Ticinens. de Laudibus Papiæ, c. 17. ap. Murator. Rer. It. Script. tom. xi.

† Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, i. ii. 2.

‡ Wadding, An. Minor. an. 1234.

§ Opusc. iv. 1.

they contained, of pious gratitude and domestic affection commemorative of the dead who reposed beneath them; for they were generally full of sepulchres, many of them in the highest degree remarkable. Here lay emperors, philosophers, statesmen, and heroes, who had so often reposed a while in abbeys from the cares of their respective stations, or in their later years had sought in their peaceful solitude that calm for which they vainly sighed throughout a troubled existence. The historian makes us acquainted with the events of their lives: the monk recalls their memory in a manner perhaps still more forcible, by leading us to their tombs.

The abbeys of the west, so many of them founded by the crusaders, bore record in marble of the perils and escapes of their benefactors amidst those great events. Thus in the Cistercian abbey of Breüil-Benoît, on the river Eure, founded in 1137, was a chapel erected in pursuance of a vow made by William de Marcilly, son of the first founder, to testify his pious gratitude for his miraculous deliverance from the hands of the Turks, and return to his parents and country. But what, above all, arrested the attention of those who visited monasteries with a view to interest of this kind, was the sepulchral lore in which they were so singularly rich; for in consequence of many considerations, the desire to be interred within them was throughout the middle ages almost universal.

Louis-le-gros used often to explain his motive for wishing to be buried in the Abbey of St. Denis, amidst the saints. "It was," he said, "in order that by the prayers of the pilgrims and others passing, he might obtain pardon of his sins *." Even when humility shrunk from burial with the martyrs, men still clung to the hope of being associated in the grave with the monastic dead. Orderic Vitalis says, that in the year 1108, Philip, King of France, fell sick, and seeing that his end was near, he convoked the grandees of the state and his friends, and spoke as follows: "I know that the sepulture of the French kings is at St. Denis: but as I feel that I am a great sinner, I do not dare to have my burial near the body of so great a martyr. I revere St. Benedict, that tender father of monks, and I desire to

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* Chroniques de St. Denis, an. 1137.

be buried in his church on the Loire." According to his desire he was therefore buried in the monastery of St. Benoit de Fleuri, between the choir and the altar*. We find instances of restitution being made to monks, with a view to gaining burial in their church.

Frederic d'Etampes, son of Gaudric and Isembard, surnamed Payen, made a solemn restitution of ecclesiastical goods to the monastery of Longpont. Frederic came there and deposed the act upon the altar. The monks proceeded to associate him in the prayers of the community, in giving him the book of the Gospels to touch, and they promised to bury him in their church. After which he gave the kiss of peace to each of the monks†. When they could not have actually sepulture with the monks, still men sought to have the benefit of their prayers. Thus the archbishop of Tours approaching his last hour, caused letters to be written to Pope Innocent III. which after his decease were delivered under his seal to that pontiff by Magister Peter de Vico, in which he humbly besought him to charge, by letters, the prior and monks of Grandemont, to pray to God for his soul‡.

It is easy to account for this general solicitude. From the peace of the living to the peace of the dead, the transition of thought was natural. The monks who provided for the former, had leisure to study what was conducive to the latter; they had time to think of those who were departed to the other world, and hence with fervent and fraternal love they sought to secure for every man a tranquil grave and an eternal rest. They were ingenious in exercising charity to the dead. In the abbey of Einsiedelin, there was an anniversary office for the souls of the poor strange pilgrims who had died there. "Let not the brethren slumber," says Cæsar of Heisterbach, "when they chant for the dead; because as knights are gathered together to a tournament, so flock souls to the office of the dead §." Men observed with what fidelity and reverence monks of all orders sung the requiem of those whose souls were commended to their prayers. Moreover the Christian world could not be heedless of the fact that it was in a monastery, that of Cluny under Odilo in 998, that the feast of All Souls, that most affecting, most tender commemoration, was first celebrated, which in the following year was regularly instituted for the whole church by Pope Silvester the second. It was evident that the interests of the dead were most studied and attended to in these communities. What could be more natural than that men should desire to come in personally for a share of the benefit? Those who best knew what passed in monasteries, from being themselves their inmates, may be proposed as taking the lead in manifestations of this desire. Thus the holy founder of the celebrated abbey in the forest of Fontevraud being on his travels, and perceiving himself about to die, had no other fear but that of not being interred in his beloved house. "O Fontevraud, Fontevraud," he cried, "I wished so much to rest with you!" Sending for the bishop of the city, he said to him, "Father, know that I do not wish to be buried at Bethlehem, where God deigned to be born of a virgin, nor at Jerusalem near the holy sepulchre, nor at Rome among the martyrs; it is at Fontevraud, no where but at Fontevraud that I wish to repose." There accordingly Dom Martene found his tomb at the side of the altar. Those who in life had given the strongest proof of attachment to the monks by founding abbeys, may be cited as following them nearest in regard to this solicitude. "King Henry," says Orderic Vitalis, "died at the castle of Lyons in Normandy; but at his desire, his body after the delay of a month, in consequence of unfavourable winds, during which time it lay in the choir of St. Stephen at Caen, was at length placed on board a ship by the monks, who were charged with the office, and transported to England, where it was buried with great honours in the abbey of Reading *." Of the zeal evinced by surviving relatives to fulfil such desires, even when they were only presumed, many instances occur. Thus in 1146 the Marchioness of Lucard, taking offence at having been refused some favour by the abbot of Mount Sereno, and a few days after dying at Gerbestad, was buried

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* Lib. xi.

† Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, xi. 262.

‡ Epist. Inn. iii. lib. x. 47.

§ Illust. Mirac. viii. 96.

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* Lib. xiii.

there by advice of Hojer, Count of Mansfeld. At that time the Marquis Conrad returned from beyond the sea, and on arriving in Bavaria learned the sad event of his wife's death. Hearing that she had not been buried in the abbey of Mount Sereno, by advice of Hojer, he became very angry, and declared that he would compel him to dig her up with his own hands. Hojer hearing of his anger, and wishing to regain his favour, went by night and persuaded the guardians to disinter her; it being six months after she had been buried. This being done, he conveyed the body to Witin, where he met the Marquis. Thence it was borne to the monastery of Mount Sereno, and honourably buried the same day; the Marquis making donations to endow three altars for the repose of her soul, to each of which six manses were appropriated *.

Again, we must remember that monasteries were often the only asylums for the bodies as well as the souls of men on whom the world frowned. Hence we find such persons in their last sickness, eager to reach them before they died, like Wolsey pursuing his journey to Leicester, and greeting the abbot and his convent there with these words: " O father abbot, an old man, broken with the storms of state, is come to lay his weary bones among you; give him a little earth for charity." In the Saxon chronicle the account of the imprisonment and blinding of the innocent Etheling Alfred, son of King Ethelred, who was afterwards led to the monastery of Ely, concludes with these lines:

" Then to the monks they brought
Their captive; where he sought
A refuge from his foes
Till life's sad evening close.
His body ordered then
These good and holy men,
According to his worth,
Low in the sacred earth,
To the steeple full-nigh,
In the south aisle to lie
Of the transept west;
His soul with Christ doth rest."

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* Chronic. Montis Sereni ap. Menckenii Script. Rer. Germ. 11.

There was in fact a spirit of generous independence in the religious orders, which prompted them to disregard all base fear in granting burial to the dead, when by that act they might incur the resentment of the powerful. Hence the abbeys abound with tombs of unhappy men, unjustly doomed. How many gentle, and brave, and generous, over whose dark fate no lorn bard breathed one melodious sigh, whose honour is avenged by monks in the inscriptions on their sepulchre! Ratherius præsul, sed ter Ratherius exul, is the sentence on the tomb of that great bishop of Verona, who after being successively expelled from the sees of Verona and Liege, died in the convent of Lobes, where he had originally been a monk, and where his tomb was erected with only this epitaph *. In the Cistercian house of the Complutensian academy at Alcala, is the tomb of William Walsh, a Benedictine monk and bishop, on which it is stated that after suffering an imprisonment of thirteen years for the Catholic faith, he died there an exile †. In 1134, Robert II. Duke of Normandy died at Cardiff, in the twenty-eighth year of his imprisonment, after having been taken at Tinchebrai. Orderic Vitalis only adds, "he reposes buried in the convent of the monks of St. Peter at Gloucester ‡." Count Waldeve, accused of treason against William, was kept in prison at Winchester. "During a year," says Orderic, "he did penance there for the sins of his past life, and never failed every day to sing one hundred and fifty Psalms of David, which he had learned in his childhood." He surpassed most men in generosity as well as in courage. Devout adorer of God, he listened with reverence to the monks, and cherished tenderly the church and the poor. For these reasons he was beloved by all who fulfilled the will of God, and his deliverance was ardently desired. Ingulphus says that the Count's confessor, the venerable archbishop Lanfranc, declared that he was innocent of the conspiracy, and that his death would be that of a martyr; but that his impious wife contributed to his death, and also that the Normans longed for his lordships of Northampton and Huntingdon; so in fine his enemies prevailed, and sentence of death was passed and

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* Trithem. Chronic. Hirsaug.

† Notit. Abb. Ord. Cister.

‡ Lib. xiii.

executed before the citizens of Winchester had risen from their beds. His body was cast into a trench, and no one dared to touch it. But after fifteen days it was taken up, still quite fresh, by Visketel, abbot of Croyland, washed, and carried with general mourning to the monastery of Croyland, where it was buried. Ingulphus says, that the abbot continuing to extol him in his sermons, the Normans became enraged and summoned him to a council at London, where he was deposed, condemned to prison, and sent to Glastonbury, to be far from all that knew him. It was on this occasion that Ingulphus, who after studying at Westminster and Oxford, and making a pilgrimage to Jerusalem, had been prior at Fontanelle in Normandy, was elected abbot of Croyland. Under him in the next reign, the monks grieving that the tomb of their benefactor, Count Waldeve, should be exposed to the wind and the rain, resolved, by advice of Ingulphus, to translate his remains into the church. When the day came, a crowd of faithful people assembled, and the monks proceeded with lights and all reverence, expecting to find only his bones and ashes; for it was the sixteenth year of his sleep: but when the tomb was opened, they found his body as whole as the day he was buried. The head was joined to the body, and only a thin red mark like a thread was round the neck. The Abbot Ingulphus knelt down and kissed him on the face. The body was then solemnly borne into the church, and placed in a tomb by the side of St. Guthlac, on which the monks placed the following inscription: "This stone covers the intrepid son of Siward the Dane, the excellent Earl Waldeve. He lived with honour, feared for his prowess. Yet in the midst of corruptible riches and honours, he loved Christ and endeavoured to please him. He served the church, loved with respect the clergy, and in a peculiar manner the monks of Croyland, who were faithful to his memory. Finally, struck by the sword of Norman judges, his limbs were confided to the earth on the last day of May. The marshes of Croyland rejoiced to possess the tomb of a nobleman, who as long as he lived loved this place with a great respect. May the Almighty grant to his soul eternal rest in the citadel of Heaven *."

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* Lib. iv.

Soon after his election, Ingulphus had ridden to London, and made such interest with great men, that he procured the deliverance of his predecessor, Visketel; and he accordingly sent an escort to conduct him from Glastonbury to Croyland, and, says Ingulphus, "with all favour and filial love beholding his worthy and venerable person, so excellent with the most holy piety, I replaced him in his ancient stall in the choir, and while he lived I only regarded myself as the procurator of the monastery. From him I learnt much concerning England. The venerable man died on the feast of St. Jerome in 1085."

In the great abbey of the Celestins at Marcoucies was another memorable instance; for here, in the middle of the choir, with his feet towards the altar, lies a sculptured figure of the founder, John de Montaigu, who is buried under it; and the inscription on the tomb proves the pious fidelity of the monks to his memory; for it ends thus, "lequel en haine des bons et loyaux services par lui faits au Roy et au Royaume fut par les rebelles ennemis du Roy injustement mis à mort à Paris;" and on another place were these verses—

"Pour ce qu'en paix tenois le sang de France;
Et soulageois le peuple de grevance,
Je souffris mort contre droit et justice
Et sans raison: Dieu si m'en soit propice."

By his side was buried Gerard de Montaigu, bishop of Paris, brother of the founder. It was the sight of this tomb, and the noble reply of the monk who showed it, that made Francis I. declare that "he would never sentence any man to death by commissioners *."

In Spanish histories we read indeed that the magnificent sepulchre of Alvarus de Luna at Toledo was destroyed by the infante Henry Peter; but, in general, this charity of the monks furnished an occasion, of which princes availed themselves, to evince magnanimity, as when king John of Castille restored the sepulchre of that disgraced minister, and rejected with indignation the advice of his courtiers, when they complained that a man beheaded by his order should have a tomb among kings †.

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* Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, ix. 276.

† Rod. Santii Hist. Hisp. pt. iv. c. 33.

Men who had owed deliverance from the hands of their enemies to the intercession of these men of peace, would naturally desire that their bones might rest near them, where the same prayers which had moved cruel men would be offered in their behalf to the God of mercy. Accordingly the tombs of such men are often found in the monastic churches. Thus in the Carthusian monastery of Mawrbach we find the sepulchre of Frederic III. of Austria, who, in 1322, after the battle of Emphingen, in which he was defeated by the emperor Lewis of Bavaria, was thrown into prison, first in the castle of Dornberg and afterwards in that of Trawsennicht, where he remained in misery until in 1325, when, after fruitless attempts by the pope and many great personages to obtain his release, he was delivered by means of the prior of this monastery, in which he now lies buried. One ancient chronicle remarks, that he bore his misfortune with great equanimity, and preferred suffering that cruel imprisonment to gaining his liberty by unlawful means; adding this curious tale, that when some one with more zeal than knowledge sent by necromancy an evil demon into the prison, by whom Frederic might have been delivered, the pious hero refused, and ordered the monster to depart, and guarded his forehead and breast with the sign of the cross. However, at length Gotfried, prior of Mawrbach, true to the etymology of his name, a peace-maker, went in the spirit of fortitude to Lewis, and said, "O prince, why do you not pardon your relative and friend? why attend to the counsels of the vain, who endeavour to subvert the clemency of princes? Do you not perceive that you will gain more honour by dispelling your indignation than by cherishing it?" Lewis was moved at the words of the monk. He ordered Frederic to be led into his presence, where the prior celebrated mass and gave them both the sacred communion from one Host. Frederic and Lewis then gave each other the kiss of peace, and became ever afterwards as closely united as Jonathan and David. Frederic returned to Austria as he came out from prison without having shaved his beard, so that he could be scarcely recognized by any one. His return was heard of with immense joy by all the people. Thenceforth he attempted nothing against Lewis, but lived quietly, and went no more to battle; but as Horace says, "post Punica bella quietus." Finally, in 1329, he found this quiet grave with the men who had delivered him *.

That the monastic charity, in regard to the burial of the dead, was extended also to those who died in a state of utter destitution, appears from a statute of the Capuchins in their first general congregation held in 1529. "We decree," say those fathers, "that no dead bodies, besides those of our brethren departed, should be admitted into our churches, unless perchance of some poor persons to whom burial had been refused by the parish priest † on account of poverty. If such bodies should be brought to our convents and to our deserts, they must be received and buried; for it is a work of piety. Let nothing be received for their sepulture; but for charity let us pray to God for their souls ‡." Perhaps one of the most affecting instances of this solicitude occurs in the history of St. Hughes, who brought with him, from the Carthusian cloisters to the see of Lincoln, all the monastic tenderness. To the burial of the dead he continued so devoted throughout his life, that the historian of his order attributes the singular magnificence of his own funeral—at which assisted two kings, three archbishops, fourteen bishops, more than one hundred abbots, and a crowd of counts, barons, and knights, English, Norman, Franc, Burgundian, Irish, and Scotch—to the especial ordinance of the providence of God, as indicating how much his piety towards the dead had pleased heaven §. It is related of him, on one occasion, that being at Rouen, and invited to dinner by Richard, king of England, he refused to go to the palace until he had assisted to bury the dead; and to the courtiers who urged him to hasten, replied, "Let the king sup in the name of the Lord; for it is better that he should sup without us, than that we should neglect humility according to the command of the eternal King ||." Such were the lessons he had learned in the school of St. Bruno.

For all these reasons, then, the churches of the monks contained the sepulchres, or at least the bones, of those who had drunk to the dregs that cup of manifold advers-

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* Anon. Lesbiensis Chron. lib. v. ap. Pez. Script. Rer. Aust. i.

† A case however which subjected him to ecclesiastical censures.

‡ Annales Capucinorum, ad an. 1529.

§ Dorlandi Chronicon Cartus. lib. iii. 13.

|| Id. lib. iii. c. 8.

ity which is administered for wise and beneficent purposes to many amongst the children of men. But now abandoning this particular view, let us take notice of the tombs, which evince the desire of the great in general to obtain burial in monastic ground. The number of these in the ancient Benedictine abbeys of Europe might be styled infinite; and after the thirteenth century the Mendicant orders took full part in the same ministry. The crowd of magnificent sepulchres in the convents of the Franciscans show indeed with what peculiar love that order was regarded by the devout nobility. "From the first coming of these and the Dominicans to Venice," Dandolo says, "that we find the dukes generally choosing to be buried either before their doors or in their churches *." What a multitude of great princes and nobles were entombed in the convent of the Minors at Vienna †! and in the houses of that order in France how many sepulchres of heroes! many of whom, like Count Elzear de Sabran, in the convent at Paris, had been buried even wearing the habit. It was in the Franciscan convents in Ireland, of Athlone and Kildare, that were found the tombs of the Dillons and of the lords of Offaly ‡. Everywhere the same desire was manifested, insomuch that some prelates and secular clerks even denied the last sacraments to those who chose their sepulchre in the convents of the Franciscans; and pope Alexander IV. was obliged to write against such injustice, to declare that these holy friars might continue to provide those who turned to them in death with quiet graves §.

While proceeding now to view the tombs, we may remark what an additional interest must have attended such inspections, from the circumstance of having for guide a monk who was often a learned historian and a saint. The office of escorting strangers to the sepulchres of the kings in the abbey of St. Denis was at one time discharged by Mabillon. What must it have been to hear the comments of such a guide standing over the

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* And. Danduli Chronic. passim, ap. Murat. Rer. It. Script. xii.

† Necrolog. R.R. P.P. Minorum, Conv. Vienn. ap. Pez. Script. Rer. Aust. ii.

‡ Wadding, Ann. Min. iii. vi.

§ Wadding, Ann. Min. iv. ad an. 1260.

grave of St. Louis! We have only to cast our eyes around us as we walk on, or to descend, holding these lighted tapers, to the crypts where so many sleep in dull cold marble, to find an interest in monasteries, which, if there had been nothing else to allege in their favour, ought to have secured their preservation to the end of time. Are we in the abbey church of Cluny? how many sepulchres of saints and illustrious personages on all sides! Are we in that of St. Vaast in Arras? we have around us the noblest tombs in all the low countries. Dom Martene, on visiting the abbey of St. Germain at Auxerre, observes, "This place is perhaps the most venerable in the whole kingdom; and, after the catacombs of Rome, I do not know if one can find any more holy. More than sixty canonized saints repose here *." "The abbey of St. Victor without the walls and near the port," says Dom Martene, "is the most venerable place of Marseilles; all the land about it used to be called Paradise, from the sanctity of the monks who inhabited it. Cassien was its founder; his sepulchre of marble is there, as also that of pope Urban V., who had been abbot of this house." The subterraneous church again of the Minims at Arles, which was formerly a priory dependent on Lerins, inspires, he says, a respect which cannot be expressed. Here one sees seven marble tombs; amongst others, that of St. Hilary of Arles. Around the church are an infinity of marble sepulchres. Dom Martene thinks, "that the tombs around the little church of the Holy Cross, thought to have been built by Charlemagne, which stands near the monastery of Montmajour, to the south of Arles, were not those of the soldiers of that king slain by the Saracens, but that the place was the ancient cemetery of the monks, who had a chapel in the midst according to the old custom †." But some ancient authors are very positive on this point. They say that great was the desire of many to be buried in this field of Eligius, from the idea that no diabolic delusions, like those read of in the Gospels as dwelling near tombs, were suffered to linger round the dead bodies that rested in it. All that in Gaul, or round the Pyrenæan mountains, or the Apennines, fell in battle with the pagans, wished, they tell us, to have their burial

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[*] Voyage Lit. i. 56.

[†] Voyage Lit. 281.

there, and were borne thither, some on chariots, others on horses, others in boats that descended the Rhone, whose waters, to prevent their passing beyond it, would whirl them round in ceaseless circles if there was an attempt at further progress *. In this inspection of the tombs of the monastery, those of the religious naturally should have precedence. Let us observe a few of the most curious and venerable as we pass. But ere we take a step in advance, it is impossible to resist the solemn impression which comes over the mind on approaching them.

Luther arriving on the eve of Palm Sunday at Erfurth, descended at the convent of the Augustines, where, a few years before, he had taken the habit. It was nightfall; a little wooden cross over the tomb of a brother whom he had known, and who had lately departed sweetly to the Lord, struck his attention and troubled his soul. He was himself no longer the poor friar travelling on foot and begging his bread. His power equalled that of Charles V., and all men had their eyes on him. That morning, on his march, he had sung the famous war hymn which Heyne compares to the Marseillaise; and the emperor was about to resist him, as he said in his imperial rescript, "though at the peril of his own blood, of his dignity, and of the fortune of the empire." The triumphant innovator was recalled to himself for an instant by seeing the tomb of a faithful brother. He pointed it out to Doctor Jonas: "See, there he rests; and I ——": he could not finish. After a little while he returned to it, and sat down on the stone, where he remained more than an hour, and till Amsdorf was obliged to remind him that the convent-bell had tolled the hour for sleep †. Well might the heart, in which such tempests were still gathering, have wept at the image of that quiet grave. Let us now approach and mark each singly.

In the abbey of Clairvaux, Dom Martene saw the tombs of St. Bernard, of St. Malachy, and of some holy martyrs, which were behind the great altar. In a crypt near the cemetery of the abbots were ranged the bones of the monks who were contemporary with St. Bernard, and who are revered as saints. In the abbey of St.

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* Gerv. Tilb. Otia Imperialia, xc.

† Audin, Vie de Luther.

Germain-des-Près, the names of many monks of happy memory were handed down in ancient inscriptions, though all trace of their actions had been lost. But here we need not pause. These graves are all too old now to remember the sorrow which consigned its charge to each. Some tombs of monks convey lessons of humility, as in the epitaph of St. Bruno—

> " Doctor eram, præco Christi, vir notus in orbe ;
> Desuper illud erat, gratia, non meritum *."

Others attest in a remarkable manner the virtues of their tenants. Such was that of John Walleis, an English Franciscan, commonly called Arbor vitæ, on account of the fruits of erudition for spiritual nourishment which he produced. He died at Paris, smiling, with the words, " I am going to my country." And on his sepulchre, in the convent of the Minors, there was a tree sculptured in allusion to his name †. Such also was that of John Ballin, the historian, and monk of the abbey of Clairmarais, which was at the end of the cloister near the image of the blessed Virgin; for his epitaph consisted of a picture of the flagellation of Christ, having on the right our lady of sorrows, and on the left his own portrait, with that of his patron St. John ‡. Orderic Vitalis seems to think that the very carved images on some tombs bespeak the sanctity of those they represent; for, speaking of the abbey of St. Ceneri, in which 140 monks had cultivated the Lord's vineyard, but which, having been ravaged by Hastings, became a retreat for a tribe of murderous robbers, who took possession of the rock on which it had stood: he says, " the stone tombs placed in and about the church evidently attest, to those who visit them, what respect is due to the monks who there repose §." On the tomb of St. Bonaventura, in the convent of the Minors at Lyons, were these verses—

> " Ille hominum plausu nequidquam excitus inani ;
> Sed cura majore actus, melioraque versans
> Pectore consilia, insani præconia vulgi
> Despicit, et varios ultro aversatur honores."

On the death of this great doctor, which filled the

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* Pet. Sutorus de Vita Carthus. i. 3. 5. † Wadding, An. Min. iv.
‡ Piers. Hist. des Abb. de Watten et de Clairm. § Lib. viii.

whole church with grief, the pope by letters recommended all prelates and priests throughout the world that each should sing a mass for his soul. The whole city of Lyons, where he died, attending the council, assisted at his obsequies with tears. The Calvinists, on arriving here, threw his body into the Arar; but the head and other detached parts were preserved from falling into their hands *. On some of these sepulchres we may read the whole history of a cloistral life, as in the epitaph of John d'Authon, composed by John Bouchet:—

> "Dix ans avant que mourut ce bon pere,
> Austere vie il tint en monastere,
> En mesprisant par merveilleux desdaing
> Les gens du monde et tout honneur mondain."

He slept on no soft couch:—

> "Tousjours estoit le premier à matines.
> Combien qu'il fust noble des deux coustez,
> Il ne vouloit ne chasse, ne venerie,
> En solitude il vivoit tout seulet,
> De conscience estoit fort timoreuse."

He departed, repeating many fine verses:—

> "Le corps duqel repose sous la lame:
> Priez à Dieu que pardon face à l'ame †."

Very striking were the tombs and epitaphs of the great convertites in abbeys. Mark, for instance, this inscription in the cloister of Cluny: "Hic requiescit vir celebrandæ memoriæ, magnusque seculi contemptor, Hugo, olim Dux Burgundiæ, postea sacerdos et monachus hujus sanctæ ecclesiæ Cluniacensis. Anima ejus requiescat in pace! Amen ‡." Deeply interesting were also those of Palmers, such as that of Antonio, surnamed Peregrinus; of the noble family of Manzonia, of Padua, who at length, after living unknown for some time in the monastery of St. Mary de Porcilia, in Padua, passed thence to Christ, in 1261, who is commemorated on his sepulchre in that

* Wadding, iv. an. 1274.

† Goujet, Bibliothèque Française, tom. xi.

‡ Chronic. Cluniacens.

abbey as one "qui omnia loca sancta visitavit." The magnificent tomb over the humble Louis de Blois, on which he was styled "the ornament and miracle of his age,"—and the sepulchre of St. Remy, in the abbey which bears his name, round which were represented the twelve peers of France, as large as life, with their usual symbols as in the coronation of the French kings,—convey moreover a testimony to the virtue of the times themselves, when sanctity received such honours. Another class of these sepulchres, which cannot be viewed without intense emotion, attests the learning and renown of those monks, with whose writings we are now so familiar. Thus we find the tomb of Richard of St. Victor, on which these lines were engraved, on brass:—

"Moribus, ingenio, doctrinâ clarus et arte,
Pulvereo hić tegeris, docte Richarde, situ.
Quem tellus genuit fœlici Scotica partu,
Te fovet in gremio Gallica terra suo.
Nil tibi Parca ferox nocuit, quæ stamina parvo
Tempore tracta, gravi rupit acerba manu.
Plurima namque tui superant monimenta laboris,
Quæ tibi perpetuum sint paritura decus.
Segnior ut lento sceleratas mors petit ædes,
Sic propero nimis it sub pia tecta gradu."

Gaspar Jongelinus, when he visited Cisteaux, saw the sepulchre of the great and celebrated Doctor Alanus, which was at the left side of the cloister, near the entrance of the church. The epitaph was as follows:—

"Alanum brevis hora, brevi tumulo sepelivit,
Qui duo, qui septem, qui totum scibile scivit,
Labentis sæcli contemptis rebus egens fit.
Intus conversus, gregibus commissus alendis,
Mille ducenteno nonageno quoque quarto
Christo devotus mortales exuit artus *."

When Dom Martene visited that abbey, where Alanus, he says, had left, as a convertite, an immense fame, he found a French epitaph on his tomb, nearly to the same effect †. Round the sepulchre of Dun Scotus, in the convent of the Franciscans at Cologne, the names of fifteen doctors were inscribed in brass, amongst whom William

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* Notit. Abb. Ord. Cisterc.

† Voyage Lit. i. 214.

of Ware is designated as Magister Guillelmus Varro, Præceptor Scoti*. The testimony of some monastic tombs may be cited also as attesting miraculous foresight. Such is that of Didacus Badam, a Minor friar, in the convent of Majorica, in Spain, on which is a rude inscription relating his history: the year and day of his death being stated, these lines follow:—

"Die hoc et mense migravit prædictus.
Quiescat in pace, sitque benedictus. Amen.
Vivens sic scribit de sua certus morte:
Incertus de hora, gaudet mortis mora;
Tempus si addatur, Summo dirigente,
Versus mutabitur, vivo congaudente."

In another chapel lies his brother, Garsias Badam, a man of holy life, on whose tomb we read,—

"Is qui jacet, mortis dum novit et horam †."

The sepulchres of the monks, again, are often made to convey solemn lessons to the living. Such is that of Willeram, a monk of Fulda, who flourished in the eleventh century, on which were these lines:—

"Fuldensi Monachus Wilram de fonte vocatus,
  Hic licet indignus Pastor eram positus,
Nominis officium corrupit fictio morum;
  Qui sibi nempe malus, cui valet esse bonus?
Correxi libros, neglexi moribus illos:
  Justi suppliciis conscius ipse mihi;
Sed quia deliqui, tua Christe flagella cupivi,
  Te tamen hoc solum det mihi propicium ‡."

Such also was that tomb of Ponce, abbot of Cluny, predecessor of Peter the Venerable, who was represented upon his sepulchre in that abbey, lying with his feet tied and his hand cut off, to signify that he died excommunicated §. Such too was the tomb of Father Lupus, at Louvain, one of the most celebrated doctors of that university; of which the epitaph, composed by himself, was as follows:—

"Hæres peccati, natura filius iræ
  Hic jaceo, dignus nomine reque Lupus.

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* Wadding, iv.

† Ibid. tom. iv. 1257.

‡ Schannat. Historia Fuldensis, pt. i.

§ Voyage de Deux Bénéd. i.

Indignus, non re, sed solo nomine doctor,
  Verbis, non factis me docuisse fleo.
Perdocuisse alios, et non docuisse seipsum,
  Quid juvat? O mundi fumus, inane, nihil!
Agne Deus, Patris doctrina, redemtio mundi,
  Nunc tibi prostratum commiserare reum.
Et latro et meretrix gratis tua regna subintrant.
  Gratia peccatis fiat, et ista meis."

The first line appears to have been borrowed from the epitaph on the great Adam of St. Victor, which was engraved on brass upon his tomb in that cloister at Paris. This perhaps was the most beautiful that could any where be found: it was as follows:—

" Hæres peccati, natura filius iræ,
  Exiliique reus nascitur omnis homo.
Unde superbit homo? cujus conceptio culpa,
  Nasci pœna, labor vita, necesse mori.
Vana salus hominis, vanus decor, omnia vana:
  Inter vana nihil vanius est homine.
Dum magis alludit præsentis gloria vitæ,
  Præterit, immo fugit, non fugit, immo perit.
Post hominem vermis, post vermem fit cinis, heu, heu!
  Sic redit ad cinerem gloria nostra simul.
Hic ego qui jaceo miser, et miserabilis Adam,
  Unam, pro summo munere, posco precem.
Peccavi, fateor, veniam peto, parce fatenti:
  Parce Pater, fratres parcite, parce Deus."

"These lines are a proof," says Pasquier, "that there were brave scholars at St. Victor's at that time: et certes j'oppose ceste pièce à tous epitaphes, tant anciens que modernes, et nous pouvons de cet eschantillon juger que les bonnes lettres ettoient lors à bonnes enseignes, logées dans ce monastere *." Finally, we may observe that the sepulchres of the monks often attest the divine peace which they enjoyed in the cloister, and expected in the future life. Such was that of brother John de Pontisara, in the abbey of St. Germain-des-Près, "in quo," as the epitaph attested, "sensus erat, bonitas, pax, et moderamen;" and that of brother Peter de Nangis, in the same monastery, whose peaceful goodness was also commemo-

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* Recherches de la France, liv. iii. c. 29.

rated *. On an ancient tomb in Rheims was this inscription:—

"Hic tegitur, cujus in factis gratia, cujus
Pax in corde fuit, cujus in ore modus."

The epitaph on Folrad, abbot of St. Denis, contained these lines:—

"Felix illa hominum est mors et pretiosa bonorum
Gloria quam sequitur, vita, salusque quies †."

The words on the tomb of Father Domenico, in the convent of the Carmelites at Pausilypo,—"De paradiso ad paradisum transiens, 1522,"—were perhaps still more expressive in their simplicity ‡. Amongst the tombs of the monks we find also often those of great prelates, who sought communion with them in the grave. Thus the archbishops of Rheims wished to be buried in the abbey of St. Remy. In the abbey of Clairvaux, near the great altar, was the tomb of John de Blanchemain, archbishop of Lyons, who renounced his see, to retire to this monastery. In the north transept were the tombs of five holy bishops, who from the same place passed to heaven. Under the choir of the church of the abbey of St. Matthias, at Treves, was a great crypt, where Dom Martene saw the tombs of the first bishops of Treves, who were all saints. "We counted," he says, "fourteen of them. This is perhaps the most venerable place in Treves." In the abbey of Fecamp was the tomb of William, bishop of Bayeux, on which were these words, inscribed by Hildebert: "On the sixth day which precedes the month of April, his course ended, his recompense commenced." At the cloistral gate of St. Maurice, at Angers, is the tomb and image of Ulgerius, who, from a poor scholastic, became a celebrated master, and finally bishop of that see. He died in 1148. The following is the epitaph:—

"Hic jacet Ulgerius teneris consuetus ab annis
Lingua, mente, manu fructificare Deo.
Hujus opus multis prodesse, monere, docere,

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* D. Bouillart, Hist. de l'Abb. de S. Ger.

† Ap. Martene, Vet. Script. vi.

‡ Antiq. et Hist. Campaniæ ap. Græv. Thes. Antiq. It. ix.

Flentem solari, nudum vestire, superbum
Frangere, ne quemquam lædere, recta sequi *."

But, leaving now the tombs of the religious men, let us cast a hasty glance at those of the ancient kings and feudal princes who lie near them; many of whom, as we have already observed, were moved by a true faith, while others no doubt were actuated only by an unavailing sentiment of remorse and terror, in their desire to have burial here. It was no consoling spectacle, though it must have been deeply interesting, to behold many tombs of Merovingian kings in the abbeys of St. Germain-des-Près and of St. Denis. Those tragic figures, so barbarous and so terrible, which pass before us in the pages of St. Gregory of Tours,—it was here that they rested. Our proud Norman kings, too, and Plantagenets, who often in their lives deserved so ill of peace, and of these the hardest, most iron, and implacable, who warred against their own fathers, seemed softened at the memory of the cloister, and to recognise their error when they chose their tomb. The mausoleums of Henry and Richard, kings of England, are found, not in regal chapels under martial trophies of heraldic blazon, but with that of Queen Eleanor, in the spot where holy virgins only chant round them, in the choir of their church of Fontevrault. On the other hand, to find the tombs of those heroic and beneficent princes who are gathered to the kings of thought,—

" Who waged contention with their time's decay,
And of the past are all that cannot pass away,"

men had to repair likewise to the churches of the monks; it was there that they found them: Alfred, Edward the Confessor, and St. Louis, lay buried in monasteries. Charles Martel, that great instrument in the hands of Almighty God to defend the Western Church, lay buried in a tomb of alabaster, in the abbey of St. Denis, by the side of the high altar. Iona, founded on Druidical ruins,—Iona, the mother of monks, the oracle of the West in the seventh and eighth centuries,—contained the sepulchres of seventy kings. Like Arles, in Gaul, it might be styled a " city of the dead." In Cisteaux were found the tombs of the early dukes of Burgundy: sixty princes of that house

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* Bulæus, Hist. Univ. Paris. ii.

are buried there, along with many bishops. In the abbey of Longpont there were interred thirteen counts of Soissons; but their tombs were without epitaphs. excepting those of Raoul de Nesle, and of his wife Ade *. In the monastery of the Holy Cross, at Ratisbon, lay the early dukes of Austria. Here was the tomb of its founder, St. Leopold, duke of Austria and Styria; and also that of Sigismund, king of Hungary, called by some the Solomon of Hungary. On a controversy arising between him and his brother respecting the kingdom, he began to despise the earth; and so, unknown, came to this abbey, where, for twenty-four years, he lived in all patience and sanctity, as a lay-brother and swine-herd; but, in the article of death, he revealed his name and condition to the abbot. On his account the abbey was richly endowed by the kings of Hungary. Here lie the bodies of many dukes and marquises, with no other monument but a square stone, round which is inscribed the date of their departure. Thus on one we read, "15 cal. Novembris obiit Leopoldus, dux Bavariæ; 10 cal. Februarii obiit Ernestus, marchio Austriæ; Pridie cal. Septembris obiit Henricus, dux de Medlico; 17 cal. Maii obiit Fredericus, dux Austriæ." Here are buried also Albert, marquis of Austria; Ægra duchess of Austria, wife of Henry duke of Medlico; Gertrude of Brunswick, duchess of Austria and Styria; Rigardis, landgrave of Waldersdorff; and Offnia, countess of Schaumberg; with a multitude of German nobles †.

In the abbey of St. Remy at Rheims were the tombs of Carloman, brother of Charlemagne, of Louis IV., and of Lothaire, at the side of the high altar; of Frederone, wife of Charles the Simple; of Gerberge, daughter of the Emperor Henry and wife of Louis IV. king of France; of Ragenolde, first count of Roucy; of Aldrade, daughter of Louis IV.; of Boson, brother of King Raoul, killed at the siege of St. Quentin in 935; of Hugues, son of Count Roger; and of Count Burchard, an Englishman, who died there on his return from Rome. Some of these indeed excite no great curiosity; but what a deep historic interest must have been awakened in the pilgrim's breast

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* Hist. de Soissons, ii. 153.

† Gaspar Jongelinus, Notit. Abb. Ord. Cisterc. per Univers. Ab. lib. iv. 11.

when he beheld in the abbey of St. Faron, at Meaux, the tombs of Ogers and of Benoist, two of the most illustrious courtiers of Charlemagne, who consecrated themselves there to God *; and when he was shown in the abbey of St. Michael de Coxen, founded by Charles-le-Chauve in that spot which only the love of the cross could make agreeable, the tomb of St. Peter Urseole, doge of Venice, which stands in the choir, his relics being in a wooden shrine in an adjoining chapel; it being to this monastery that he retired! With what deep feeling must he have beheld in the abbey of St. Arnoul, at Metz, the tomb of Louis-le-Debonnaire, and in the monastery of St. Alban, at Mayence, that of Fastradana, the wife of Charlemagne, of which the epitaph concluded with the words, "Spiritus hæres sit patriæ, quæ tristia nescit;" and in the abbey of Einsiedlinn, before the chapel of St. John, the tombs of the noble warriors who fell in the battle of Morgarten, where the Swiss defeated Leopold of Austria, in which was a perpetual anniversary founded for their souls' repose †; and in the abbey of Fulda, even the tomb and ancient epitaph of Wicelinus, son of Eginhard, who had been sent there by his father to study under Raban Maur ‡. But it would be long to tell of these. How much time should we require in the noble monastery of L'Espina, in Palentia, the cloister of which was built by the family of De Meneses, and the church by that of Alburguerque, before the sepulchre of the great John de Attenza, recapitulator of the laws which the Spaniards name de Las Partidas, and before the tombs of the Lords de Vega, the most noble family in Spain §, or in the abbey of Strata Florida, in which so many princes and nobles of Wales lay buried before the sepulchres, that revealed as much history as the annals of the country then preserved ||; or in Melrose Abbey, founded about the year 636 by the pious Oswald, king of Northumbria, which St. David gave afterwards to the Cistercians, before the sepulchres of St. David and of Alexander II., kings of Scotland; of James, earl of Douglas,

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* Voyage Lit. de Deux Bén. 72.

† Tschudi Einsied. Chronik. 64.

‡ Schan. Hist. Fuldens.

§ Ib. lib. vi. 5.

|| Ib. lib. viii. 10.

who died in 1388; and of his wife Euphemia, daughter of Robert Stuart, king of Scotland *.

From the tombs of founders alone a history of nobility and knighthood might have been written, so exact and diffuse were the monks in commemorating the virtues of their benefactors. When such men composed their own epitaph, it is true that the style was often too much imbued with the monastic humility to render the testimony of much avail, as in the monastery of the Camaldolese, in a desert of Poland, where, near the great door of the church, was the tomb of the founder, Nicholas Wolski de Podhayco, without any other epitaph but the following words composed by himself:

> "Commissa mea pavesco, et ante te erubesco:
> Dum veneris judicare, Domine, noli me condemnare."

This noble Pole had been bred with the archdukes of Austria, and was distinguished for his chivalrous graces. In his youth he had visited Germany, France, England, and Italy, and was sénéchal in the imperial court of Rodulph II. After sixteen years he returned, full of learning and all virtue, to Poland. Great were his alms to the poor, and his munificence to the churches. Daily he heard mass, and recited the office of our lady. He built and endowed two monasteries of canons regular, besides this in which he lies †. But when the monks wrote the epitaph of such men, there were many details given which might serve the purposes of history. In the ancient abbey of Lagny, in the diocese of Paris, was the tomb of its great restorer, Herbert, count of Champagne and Brie, in the time of King Robert, with this inscription,—

> "Exempla morum, procerum lux, norma bonorum,
> Solamen miseris, exitium sceleris:
> Gloria virtutis, laus famæ, forma salutis."

Thibaud the Great, the fourth of this name, Count of Champagne, who had loaded this monastery with goods, was also buried there in solemn state in 1152. Moreover, the tombs of founders were often the only memorials of

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* Ib. viii. 15.

† Annal. Camaldulens. 74.

ancient families in existence: each monastery thus prevented from perishing some illustrious name and memory.

In the abbey of Hauterive was found the tomb of its knightly founder, William, count of Glana, whose portrait was pointed out to me in the hall, representing him clad in complete steel His son, the first abbot, lay buried near him, as Wolfgang Lazius relates in his book, De Migrationibus Gentium. Orderic Vitalis, speaking of the year 1107, says that many great lords of England, Richard of Reviers, and Roger, surnamed Bigod, died, and were buried in the convents which they had founded on their own estates; the latter at Tetford, and the former at Montibourg, in Normandy *. In the abbey of St. Mary, at Longueville, belonging to the monks of Cluny, in Normandy, was the tomb, he says, of Walter Gifford, earl of Buckingham, with this epitaph: "He founded and built this church in which he now rests. This powerful duke was the munificent friend of his country; mighty by his valour, illustrious by his piety, and full of respectful tenderness for monks †." In the abbey of Potiere, near that of Molêsme, Dom Martene saw the tomb of its founder, the celebrated Gerard de Roussillon, prince of Burgundy, and of other provinces, who died in 890. But it was not alone in the capacity of founders that the knightly and feudal dead lay buried here. One of the three cemeteries in the abbey of Clairvaux was set apart for the noble strangers who happened to die in that house on their journey; and this provision may account for many tombs which are found within monasteries, that seem only fraught with reminiscences of the chivalrous world. In the abbey of Clair-lieu Dom Martene observed the tomb of Nicolas de Luxembourg, on which he read,—"The knight who lies under this stone lived in high renown."

"En sens, en pace, en vertu consommé."

The monks had thus around them many tombs of men of knightly fame, to whom however they still loved to ascribe a pacific character, the epitaphs abounding in repetitions of the same noble soothing words. "Moult piteuse et grand, sage, courtois et plein d'honneur," as one reads

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* Lib. xi.

† Ib.

on the tomb of Raoul, duke of Lorraine, in the abbey of Beaupré, near Nancy. In monasteries also we find the tombs of greatest poets. Ronsard lies in the priory of St. Cosma, near Tours, on the left side of the altar; Tasso in the convent of St. Onufrio; Dante with the Franciscans at Ravenna. In fine, it was often within religious houses that those who cultivated a taste for curious researches discovered the tombs of men of dark mysterious fame, who perhaps, for many reasons, could not have had burial elsewhere. Cornelius Agrippa was interred in the church of the Dominicans at Grenoble, as was in Melrose Abbey Michael Scot, whom some persist in counting with the wizards. The sway of their strong genius, which foresaw this hope, compelled men, studious and learned, to obey their last mandate, who at their burial, round their secret strength, thronged in solemn mourning. These were the tombs about which wild legends were so often sung, like that respecting the grave of Sylvester at the porch of St. John, which used to become damp before the death of a cardinal, and to emit water, so as to flood the place, whenever a chief pontiff was about to die *. However, in general, it must be acknowledged all were aliens in such cemeteries, save the holy and the good, whose graves were moistened with the tears of men; as at the funeral of Lord Nicolas, Marquis of Est, in 1388, in the church of the Minor Friars, at which more than a thousand persons clothed themselves in black through veneration for his virtues †. These were the graves which acquired such importance in the middle ages, from the opinion which then prevailed, that men could strengthen their hearts and kindle their piety by visiting them; "for it was felt," as St. Bernard says to the knight templars, "that less devotion is experienced often where the living conversed, than where the dead repose ‡." Hence those long affecting pilgrimages to see a tomb, like that of the young Emperor Otho, in the year 1000, to Gnesen, to the grave of the friend of his youth, the holy Adalbert of Bohemia; progress, marked with such a solemn character, undertaken with such earnestness and single-mindedness, when, accompanied by many

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* Hock Gerbert und Seinjahrhundert, 104.

† Chronic. Estense ap. Murat. xv.

‡ Exhort. Ord. Mil. Temp. c. xi.

noble Romans, he entered the city on foot, bare-headed, and with naked feet; and again repeated, when, after celebrating Easter in the convent of Quedlinburg, where his sister Adelheid was abbess, of whom he took so affecting a leave, he proceeded to Aix-la-Chapelle, where he caused to be opened the grave of his great predecessor and model, Charlemagne. Thus did the heroic dead in the ages of faith fulfil the poet's words:

> "———— We meet again
> Within the minds of men, whose lips shall bless
> Our memory; and whose hopes its light retain
> When these dissevered bones are trodden in the plain."

By the low vaulted stairs, through which our guide and we did enter these dark precincts, let us now ascend, he first and we following his steps, till on our view the beautiful stained lights of the sanctuary dawn through the broad arch, that, thence issuing, we may again behold the sun.

CHAPTER IX.

Now have we left the church, and pursued the steps of our sage conductor to the library and the scholastic halls, where after brief space we shall be presented to the living, who in this vast sanctuary inherit peace. To the churches from the beginning were confided archives; for the holiness of the place secured their preservation. Justinian accordingly prescribes that his laws should be laid up in the holy church with the sacred things belonging to it. In great churches the need for a separate place for the purpose was soon felt; and at least in the fifth century, there was a place, as at Nola, set apart with appropriate officers of librarian or chancellor.

The first certain evidence of the existence of a church library, is in a letter of St. Jerome to Pammachius in 394. Soon afterwards St. Augustin speaks of the library of his church in Hippo *. In Rome, Pope Anterus in

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* De Heres. ad Quodoultdeum, c. 87.

238 had made a collection of the Holy Scriptures; and mention of libraries is made by Leo the Great, in his letter to the Emperor Leo. Hilary gave books to the church of the Lateran. In the time of St. Gregory the Great, it had already become the custom for remote bishops, whenever they had any difficulty about a book, to apply to the Pope. Such requests came to Gregory from Gaul respecting the Gesta Irenæi; when his words to the bishop Ætherius were, "De eo vero quod ecclesiæ vestræ concedendum ex antiqua consuetudine deposcitis *." Similar demands came from Alexandria respecting the martyrology of Eusebius, but he could not find their books in Rome. Martin I. excused himself to the holy Amandas, Bishop of Tongres, as he could not give him the desired books, "nam codices jam exinaniti sunt a nostra bibliotheca, et unde daremus ei, nullatenus habuimus." To the bishop of Saragossa he says, "that it is impossible to find the Libri Moralium of St. Gregory, out of the multitude of books." At the sixth general council of Constantinople in 680, the Roman deputies appeared with many writings of the holy fathers, which the Pope had given to them. Paul III. was entreated by Pepin to send some Greek books to the abbey of St. Denis, which he found and sent in 757. "We have directed to your excellence what books we could find, an antiphonale and responsale, the grammar of Aristotle, the books of Dionysius, geometry, orthography, and grammar, all in the Greek tongue †." In 855, Lupus, Abbot of Ferrieres, wrote to Benedict III. to obtain a great quantity of books, which he promised, however, punctually to restore ‡.

In the monasteries from the first, were libraries. Thus St. Augustin speaks of an abbey near Treves. "Coming to a certain house where dwelt some of thy servants, the poor in spirit, in whom is the kingdom of heaven, they found there a manuscript, containing the life of Anthony §." St. Gregory the Great also speaks of a book in the monastery of the holy Archangel in Sicily ||. In the sixth century, the cloisters were the great schools of manuscripts, for St. Benedict requires

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* Epist. ix. 50.

† Cenni Codex Carolin. i. 148.

‡ Muratori Antiq. vii. 111. 835.

§ Confess. viii. 6.

|| Epist. viii. 15.

the monks to practise such arts as were analogous to their state *. The first splendid instance of a rich monastic library was that of the monastery of Squillace, the gift of Cassiodorus, who had been born there, and who, after collecting a library at Rome as a statesman, continued to search for manuscripts to enrich the collection of his monks †, for which he advised them to write out more copies ‡, endeavouring to facilitate their task by composing his book De Orthographia. From the seventh till the eleventh century, this example was followed at Bobbio, Mount Cassino, Nonantola, la Chiusa, Pomposa, Piscara, and other Benedictine abbeys. Guibert, of Nogent, speaking of the first disciples of St. Bruno, says, " Choosing to live in the utmost poverty, they nevertheless collect a most rich library §."

Worldly books, however, were much neglected, excepting by Cassiodorus at Squillace, Gerbert at Bobbio, Hieronymus at Pomposa, and by a few others. The libraries of chapters in cathedrals also were extensive. Those of Verona and Milan in the ninth, and that of Vercelli in the tenth century, were very rich collections. In monasteries it was in the twelfth century, above all, that the reformed Benedictines, especially the Cistercians, enriched their convents with books. Yet the zeal of the Italians, says Blume, did not equal that of the French monks, whose maxim was " Claustrum sine armario, quasi castrum sine armamentario ||," or, as John of Salisbury says, " A cloister without books is a citadel without arms."

In the thirteenth century, the Dominicans and Franciscans surpassed all their predecessors in zeal for writing and collecting books ; but towards the end of the fourteenth century, the flourishing period of the spiritual archives drew to its close, and the invention of printing diminished the importance of the monastic libraries. The monks were deprived often of their choicest books. Even Ambrosius Traversari expresses joy whenever a manuscript was given to him which had belonged to a monastery, and he made no scruple in taking from reli-

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* Regul. 58.

† Cap. de Instit. Divin. Script. Præf.

‡ Id. c. viii. c. 15. 30.

§ De Vita sua, i. 10.

|| Gaufred. Canonic. Ep. xviii. ap. Martene, Thes. Anec. i.

gious houses the books of deceased monks. Thomas Phädrus took from Bobbio a pile of the most important manuscripts, which had originally come from England or Ireland: these he removed to Rome, where some have been lately brought to light by the illustrious Maï. The spoils with which Poggius returned from St. Gall to Italy are well known. The most important manuscripts with which the Vatican had been enriched from the fifteenth to the seventeenth centuries, had all come out of monasteries: many of the books of Bobbio were removed to Rome, Turin, Milan, Naples, and Vienna. Mabillon took at least one manuscript from it to Paris. A worse fate awaited these collections in England; and wherever the modern heresies penetrated, books could have no chance, when even the famous Angervillian library, first collected by Angerville, Bishop of Durham, was destroyed with the two noble libraries of Cobham, Bishop of Winchester, and that of Duke Humphrey. Weever says, that from Merton College alone a cart load of manuscripts were carried off and thrown away. Libraries as old as the seventh century, like that of Weremouth, to which the abbot Benedict had brought over such a quantity of books from Italy, then perished.

But let us return to happier times, and mark the progress of the monastic collections. Men of all classes contributed to form them. The monks, if Gerbert expresses their sentiments, applied to the work of collecting books, with a view to the peace resulting from study. This learned monk of Aurillac, writing to Eccard, abbot of Tours, says "that the cause of his undertaking such labour in collecting books in Italy, Germany, and Belgium, was his contempt for the treacheries of fortune, which contempt was the result in him, not alone of nature, but of an elaborated doctrine. Moreover," he adds, "in leisure and occupation, we learn by means of books that of which we were ignorant *." It was to his love of peace that the monk of Croyland ascribes the liberality of the Abbot Richard, in the time of Richard III. to the library of that house, which he enriched not only with books that he purchased, but also with many that were written with his own hand †. Trithemius, who

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* Epist. 44.

† Hist. Croyland.

was such a great collector, speaks of his own motive thus, "Nothing is pleasanter, nothing more delightful than reading. I have past nights without sleep, studying the Scriptures, and omitted to take my meals in order to save time for reading,—quicquid in mundo scibile est, scire semper cupiebam*." But it is Richard of Burg, who above all reveals what was in the mind of monks, when they applied with such diligence to form libraries. "In books," says this great churchman, "every one who seeketh wisdom findeth it. In these, Cherubim extend their wings, and excite the intelligence of the students, and they look from pole to pole, and from the rising to the setting sun. In these, the most high incomprehensible God is contained apprehensibly and adored. In these lies open the nature of celestial and terrestrial, and infernal things. In these are revealed laws by which all policies are ruled, the offices of the celestial hierarchy distinguished, and the tyrannies of demons described. In books I find the dead as if alive: in books I foresee the future, in books are manifested the laws of peace. All things else fail with time. Saturn ceases not to devour his offspring; for oblivion covereth the glory of the world. But God hath provided a remedy for us in books, without which all that were ever great, would have been without a memory. Towers fall to the earth, triumphal cities perish, nor can any king or pope confer a lasting privilege, unless by books. Finally, think what convenience or learning there is in books; how easily, how secretly, how securely, we may lay bare without shame to books the poverty of human ignorance. These are the masters who instruct us without rods, without anger, and without money. If you approach, they sleep not; if you interrogate them, they do not hide themselves; if you mistake, they do not murmur or laugh. O books, alone liberal and making liberal, who give to all, who ask and emancipate all who serve you. The tree of life you are, and the river of Paradise, with which the human intelligence is irrigated and made fruitful. The contemplation of truth is more perfect by books, which do not suffer the acts of the intelligence to be interrupted; therefore books seem to be the most immediate instruments of speculative felicity; consequently, no price ought to hinder a man from the purchase of books, unless on account of the malice of the seller, or the need of waiting for a more convenient time; for as wisdom is an infinite treasure, the value of books is ineffable, and therefore Aristotle, whom Averroes thinks was given as a rule in nature, gave 72,000 sestercii for a few books of Speusippus. The monks, who are so venerable, are accustomed to be solicitous in regard to books, and to be delighted in their company, as with all riches, and thence it is that we find in most monasteries such splendid treasures of erudition, giving a delectable light to the path of laics. O that devout labour of their hands in writing books; how preferable to all georgic care! O devout solicitude, by means of which neither Martha nor Mary can be corrupted. Truly the love of books is the love of wisdom, and a sensual or avaricious life cannot be combined with it: therefore some one says,

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* Nepiachus ap. Eccard. 11.

"Nulla libris erit apta manus ferrugine tincta,
Nec nummata queunt corda vacare libris,
Nummipete cum libricolis nequeunt simul esse:
Ambos crede mihi non tenet una domus."

No one can serve books and mammon; for the former reveal God. Truly an image of future beatitude is the contemplation of sacred letters, in which one time, the Creator, at another, the creature is seen, and from a perpetual torrent of delight faith is drawn: how admirable is the power of books, while by them we behold the universe, and as if in a certain mirror of eternity, the things which are not as if they were! We ascend mountains, we dive into abysses, we see creatures of all kinds, we distinguish the properties of earthly bodies, and we even pass to contemplate those that are heavenly. Lo thus by books we attain to the reward of beatitude, while we are as yet only travellers journeying towards it *."

On promotion to great dignities in the state, monks loved to make donations of books to the houses they left. Thus Simon Langham, Abbot of St. Alban's, when

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* Philobiblion, 15.

he went out of England, left the monks books to the value of £830. It was the pleasure they derived from purchasing books for their libraries, that rendered Paris so delightful to the monks and other ecclesiastics of the middle ages who visited it. "O blessed God of gods in Sion," exclaims Richard of Bury, "what a flood of pleasure rejoices our heart whenever we are at liberty to visit that Paradise of the world, Paris, where days always seem to us too few and short, through the immensity of our love! There are libraries more redolent of delight than all the shops of aromatics; there are the flowering meadows of all volumes that can be found any where. There indeed, untying our purse-strings and opening our treasures, we disperse money with a joyful heart, and ransom with dirt books that are beyond all price. But lo how good and pleasant a thing it is to gather together into one, the arms of clerical warfare, that there may be a supply of them for us to use in the wars against heretics, if ever they should rise up against us *!"

The house-diaries of abbeys are very particular in noticing donations to the library. Thus in the annals of Corby, in Saxony, we read "This year 1094, John de Mantrop gave to the library a folio book in Arabic, brought from Pannonia. In 1097, Marchwartus made a law that every novice on the day of his profession, should give a useful and valuable book to the library. He desired also that every superior of a monastery subject to ours, should collect a chronicle of his house, and send it to him to be a memorial for future ages. In 1215, Balthasar Rummer of St. Ansgarius gave us a manual, in which all his holy labours in the north are briefly and studiously noted, according to years and days. In 1379 Joachim de Bramburg gave to the library various Arabic and Hebrew books, which had been formerly taken in war in Hungary."

Laymen also cooperated. St. Louis left his books to be divided between the Franciscan and Dominican orders. Malatesta Novello of Rimini built and furnished a noble library in the Franciscan convent of Cesena. Henry III. Archduke of Bavaria, gave a noble

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* Id. c. 8.

library to the abbey of Tagernsee, where he spent many hours of devout meditation [*]. The spirit of private collectors was hardly known. In every town in Italy indeed, as Gerbert observes, books in abundance were to be found [†]. Frederic II. formed an excellent library [‡], as did in the fourteenth century Robert, King of Sicily. The crusades probably caused a number of Greek books to be brought to Italy [§]. Coluccio Salutato, Petrarch, Niccolo Niccoli, and Thomas of Sarzana, afterwards Pope Nicholas V. were all eminent instruments in collecting and collating classical manuscripts; but still these men were far removed from seeking to have private libraries. Petrarch wished to sell his books in order to erect a chapel of the blessed Virgin [||]. Niccoli's library at Florence was placed in a monastery; and also in the following age, the public libraries founded by private persons were always attached either to a monastery or to a church. One may pause here an instant to admire the wisdom of these men in this respect. "It is natural," says Blume, "that the property of communities should endure longer than what individuals may have accumulated for themselves. I know of no library which has been kept together in the hands of a private family for longer than 200 years. They are either dispersed or transferred to a foundation. Therefore it would be useless to write a history of private libraries [¶]."

What an affecting comment on this statement might be furnished by the letter of John Francis Picus of Mirandula, on the death of his uncle John Picus, to Baptist the Carmelite, in which, after observing that his death is as admirable as his life, since he departed full of holiness and charity, he adds, "It is not yet known what is to be done with his rich library. I hope, however, that I may be able to collect and arrange all the fragments and particles of his writing. Alas! fallacious hopes and vain desires! I beheld many chests full of scraps, nor did I find any thing which could be brought into light on its own feet. O if you had seen what things he had conceived, what he had undertaken, you would scarcely have been able to refrain from tears. In him revived all the philosophers and theologians, all the ancients and moderns, if not excelled, at least, if you will believe a disciple who loved him, equalled. Do you and these who are under you pour out prayers to Christ for this friendly man *." What is to be done with his library? Such is the sad question now at every scholar's death, which the wiser men of the middle ages in general took care to obviate, by collecting books for abbeys rather than for themselves. Muratori treats on the libraries of the monasteries, and gives some catalogues of books left to them by monks †. The library of Fulda, which perished in the thirty years' war, dated from the Carlovingians. Down to the beginning of the seventeenth century its collection of manuscripts was precious. Twelve monks had always been constantly employed in writing out books for it ‡. This vast library, the admiration of the Italian philosophers of the fifteenth century, was divided into forty-eight classes. Some fragments of its catalogue in the time of Charlemagne exist; the books were then chiefly lives of the holy Fathers and monastic rules §. The library of Corby in Germany was also immense. This was plundered in the wars of the sixteenth century, and transferred to that of Wolfenbüttels ||. The library of Gemblours, so rich in the historical antiquities of Belgium, was more than 700 years old at its late dispersion. In the abbey of St. Gall in the eighth century, there were still but few books. The abbot Gotzbert was the first to enlarge the collection. The abbots Grimald and Hartmot enriched it with their private collections. The former gave the Epistles of St. Paul, Missals and Gospels, Homilies, works of the Fathers, Lives of the Saints, a book on astronomy, another on medicine, a Virgil, a Chronica Julii Cæsaris, De Vita Caroli Imperatoris, De Bonitate Hludovici Imperatoris, De Regibus Merovingorum, and Epistola

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[*] Jaeck. Gallerie der Klöster Deutschlands.

[†] Tirab. iii. 3. 1.

[‡] Petri de Vin. lib. iii. Ep. 67.

[§] Heeren Gesch. des Stud. der Klass. Litt. t. 1.

[||] Epist. 34.

[¶] Blume, Iter Italicum, i.

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* Epist. lib. i.

† Antiq. Italiæ, Diss. xliii.

‡ Ziegelbauer, Hist. Lit. de l'Ord. S. Ben. i. 483. Brower, Antiquitates Fuldenses, 45.

§ Schannat. Hist. Fuldensis, P. i.

|| Heeren, Gesch. d. Class. Lit. i. 162.

Alexandri de Situ Indiæ. It is not to be wondered at, that the books in this abbey were found by Poggius and Cincius concealed and neglected in the tower, when we consider the deplorable state to which it had been reduced for some time previous by the enemies of the monks, and by the barbarous lay nobles who had destroyed the ancient discipline *. For as Trithemius remarks, whenever there was decay of discipline, the library, like every thing, was neglected, as in the abbey of St. Martin, at Spanheim, till the year 1459 †, when it again deserved the epithet of Bibliothecam illam solemnem ‡. When the reformers came to St. Gall, many precious manuscripts and records were seen carried out by children through the streets. Some were taken from them by the magistrates and laid up in the council-house. In one chest were found more than 600 brief but very old charters. There was also a census of the nobles and plebeians in the time of Louis-le-debonnaire. Some of these manuscripts came into the hands of Goldast, others into those of Schobinger §. In the books of the archives of St. Gall there are notices of the place from which each came. Thus in manuscripts of the ninth century we read, "Hæc a cœnobio S. Dionysi venit expositio;" again, "Istud, de vitibus a palatio Aquisgrani venit;" again, "Ado Episcop. Wienensis reliquias S. Desiderii cum actibus ejus vitæ misit ad S. Gallum." The library of Lobes, of which the abbots were great promoters of learning, was also very great and precious. Trithemius increased the library of his abbey, enriching it with many and most rare MSS. on parchment and paper. During the twenty years when he used to visit different abbeys of his order in various provinces, he was able to examine all their libraries, and wherever he found a duplicate copy of a book which he had not, he procured it either by purchase or promise of another in its stead. "It happened often," he says, "in different monasteries and orders, that I found many volumes of astronomy, music, mathematics, philosophy, poesy, oratory, history, medicine, and art, which the good Fathers either did not understand, or, fearing they might be an occasion of violating their holy rule, asked me to

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* Ildefons Von Arx, ii.

† Trithem. Nepiachus.

‡ Epist. ii. 3.

§ In Notis ad Vadiani Farrag. iii.

take away for myself, and to give them others printed, which they more wanted. So in the course of twenty years I have brought to this abbey about 2000 volumes. I have not seen or heard in all Germany of such a rare and wonderful collection as this became, containing such a number, not alone of common books, but of rare, hidden, secret, wonderful books, such as are scarcely to be found any where else." The manuscripts from this monastery, with those of the abbey of Lorsch, which were also precious, were removed to the Vatican in the time of Pope Gregory XV., when the library of Heidelberg was presented to the holy see by Maximilian, Duke of Bavaria, in the year 1622.

In France the monasteries were very rich in books. Stephen Pasquier cannot sufficiently express his admiration of them. "Though much," he says, "has been lost through the length of years and the misfortunes of our time, one may still gather out of the libraries of the monasteries, plusieurs beaux brins dont l'on peut embellir le public *." "I cannot omit mentioning," says Paradin, "that at St. John's in Lyons there are certain very ancient books written on the bark of trees, of which one is legible and contains a commentary on the Psalms; but the other, which is unbound and torn, is written in old characters, which, to confess the simple truth, cannot be read, though the letters are fine and clear. To many who are not skilled in such matters, they seem to be Greek letters, but they are Latin characters, of which the form only is unlike ours; so that, however clever a man may be, he would find it hard to read a page in a week. These are in fact the works of St. Avitus, Archbishop of Vienne. Some think that they are written on linen, others that it is on junk of the Nile, others that it is on little pieces of wood glued together. It is impossible to divine exactly what they are. Certainly they are venerable and worthy of being preserved, through reverence for antiquity †." The library of the abbey of Cluny before the Protestants pillaged and burnt it in the sixteenth century, was deemed one of the wonders of the world, and in fact it equalled that of the

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* Recherches de la France, iii. 19.

† Hist. de Lyons, liv. ii.

emperors at Constantinople *. The literary treasures in the abbeys of St. Remy at Rheims, of St. Benedict on the Loire, of St. Victor and St. Germain at Paris, and of St. Denis after its discipline had been reformed by Suger, were also immense. The most important manuscripts of the Petavian Library, collected by Paul Petau, and afterwards purchased by Vossius, from his son Alexander, for 40,000 livres, which forms the kernel of the present Alexandrine Library in the Vatican, came in 1562 out of the plundered abbey of St. Benoit-sur-le-Loire, from which Bongars also enriched his collection. The library of St. Victor was full of the most rare and excellent books. Frequently the original manuscripts of the great men who had rendered particular abbeys illustrious were preserved in them. Thus in Gembloux Dom Martene saw that of the Chronicle of Sigebert, the letters of Guibert, and some works of St. Ratherius. In the twelfth century the library of the abbey of St. Médard at Soissons was celebrated; and Vincent of Beauvais speaks with rapture of that of St. Martin at Tours. Respecting the libraries in the Italian abbeys, we find abundant details in the interesting work of Blume. The library of the Augustinian hermits at Padua was celebrated; writers of the middle ages speak of it with admiration †. Many of the manuscripts had been written there, though Tomasini found that many were lost or damaged, the Paris theologians and other professors who used to proceed from this monastery, having probably taken a great part away with them. The library of St. John in Verdara at Padua was perhaps the richest in that city. The Dominican library of SS. John and Paul at Venice is described by Tomasini and Montfaucon. Here was a Thucydides of the tenth century, and works by Guillelmus Pastrengicus, who from being a Turk became a monk of that house, and enriched it with many oriental manuscripts. In Bobbio, of which the library was celebrated already in 823, Mabillon found a Sacramentarium Gallicanum of the seventh century. Gerbert, who was abbot here in 972, left part of his treasures on leaving it. Dungal brought

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* Gervaise, Vie d'Abbeillard, v.

† Comment. Savonavolæ de laudibus Patavii.

here forty volumes. In all there were 700 volumes of most ancient manuscripts, a treasure which the richest library in our times would envy. Here was a martyrology of the ninth century; also the Liber S. Columbani of the tenth. On another ancient book were these lines—

> "Sancte Columba, tibi Scotto tuus incola Dungal
> Tradidit hunc librum, quo fratrum corda beentur.
> Qui legis ergo, Deus pretium sit muneris, ora."

Here was also a vast collection of books on agriculture and on the laws and division of ground. The library of La Chiusa, between Susa and Turin, was famous in the eleventh century, when Geraldus, its librarian, was a most learned man *. At the fire in 899, which destroyed the renowned abbey of Nonantola, a great part of the books were preserved. Already in 1279 there was a catalogue made of its privileges, which began upon Papyrus. Another rich catalogue was made in 1632 by command of Cardinal Antonio Barberini. In the eleventh century a catalogue existed of its manuscripts, many of which Traversari found almost consumed by age. In the seventeenth century, under the Barberini most of these were removed to the library of the S. Croce of Jerusalem at Rome. At Camaldoli the archives were in the lower monastery at Fontebuono; the library was in the upper at the hermitage, one mile higher up the mountain, where lived the celebrated Ambrosius Traversarius, who added greatly to this collection. The French removed both to the town of Bibbiena; but the autographs of Ambrosius are found in the Camaldolese convent of St. Michael at Venice. The Cistercian convent of S. Maria Maddalena at Florence had a great library, much enriched by the celebrated Ferdinando Ughelli, a monk of the house, who is said to have found a treasure here, which he expended in the purchase of books. The Dominican library of S. Maria Novella vied with that of the Franciscans of the Santa Croce. In the abbey of Pomposa was one of the most beautiful libraries in Italy. The oldest history of this collection is a catalogue written in the eleventh century. Its author names the abbot Hieronymus, his predecessor, as the founder.

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* Mabill. Acta, vi. 2.

By his order, a monk from the desert, by name and example Bonus, skilled in all arts, employed himself in collecting books, whether beautifully written or otherwise; for the said abbot resolved to have them all re-written, so as to form one body of a library. No church, no city, not even Rome, could contend with Pomposa in the quantity of its holy books. All the old monasteries of Ravenna were also rich in collections of diplomas, many of which were on papyrus. But we have not time to pursue these inquiries far; a few more notices and we have done. Throughout all Europe celebrated was the library of the great Archimandrian monastery of St. Saviour at Messina, which contained manuscript autographs of almost all the Greek Fathers *. In Spain celebrated were the libraries of the abbeys of Alvelda near Logrono, of St. Benedict of Sahagun, of St. Paul at Barcelona, of St. Vincent at Oviedo; and in Portugal at that of Alcobaça. Finally, most curious were the libraries in the monasteries of the islands of the Archipelago, as at Andros, Patmos, and Lesbos, and also in later times those on Mount Athos, which only date from the ninth and tenth centuries, of which the best account is given by John Commenus, and in Villois's Prolegomena to Homer †.

The inscription in the library Maruccelliana at Florence, "Publicæ et maxime pauperum utilitati," may serve to indicate the rule observed in the abbeys of the middle ages, where such collections were originally formed to benefit the poor. Richard de Bury expressed but a general desire when he wrote as follows: "Moved by Him who alone granteth and perfecteth a good will to men, I diligently inquired what among all the offices of piety would most please the Almighty, and most profit the church militant. Then before the eye of our mind there came a flock of chosen scholars, or rather of the elect, in whom God the Artificer, and Nature his handmaiden, had planted the roots of the best manners and sciences, but whom penury so oppressed that they were dried up, because these fruitful seeds, in consequence of want, were watered with no dew in the uncultivated soil of youth; so that their virtue lay hidden and buried. So the crop withered away, and the corn degenerated

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* Sicilia Sacra, ii. 1001.

† Heeren. Gesch. d. Class. Lit.

into tares; and they who might have grown up into strong columns of the Church, by the capacity of a subtle genius, were obliged to renounce studies. Thus they are repelled violently from the nectarean cup of philosophy, for which they thirst the more from having tasted it; and being deprived of the writings and helps necessary for contemplation, as if through a kind of apostasy, they return for the sake of bread to mechanical arts, to the loss of the Church and the scandal of the whole clergy. So mother Church cannot bring forth sons, but through want of the few and little things with which nature is contented, she loses pupils that would afterwards have become champions of the faith. Alas! how suddenly the sun is eclipsed in the bright Aurora, and the planets made to move retrograde, and the stars to fall. What can a pious man behold more deplorable? What can more excite his compassion? What can more easily dissolve into warm drops a congealed heart? Therefore we considered how much it would profit the Christian republic to bear assistance to the poor, and nourish students, not with the delights of Sardanapalus, or the riches of Crœsus, but with scholastic mediocrity. How many have we seen conspicuous by no lustre of birth and no hereditary succession, but only assisted by the piety of good men, who have deserved apostolic chairs, in which they have served the faithful, subjected the proud, and procured the liberty of the Church? Therefore the result of our meditation was pity for this obscure race of men, who might render such service to the Church, and a resolution to assist them, not only with means of subsistence, but with books for their studies; and to this end our intention ever watched before our Lord. Truly this extatic love so moved us, that renouncing all other earthly things we applied ourselves to collect books *.

The libraries of the monks were in a strict sense also public libraries; for they were open to every one. That in the convent of St. Francis, at Padua, was open during six hours every day in summer, and five in winter. But Montfaucon complained that the Benedictine library in St. Giorgio Maggiore was not sufficiently accessible.

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* Ric. de Buri Philobiblion, Prolog.

That of the Benedictines at Orleans was open to the public three days in the week [*]. Before the great revolution there were in Paris nineteen libraries constantly open to students, whereas the number at present does not exceed eight, all of which are closed during six months of the year. Dom Martene, on visiting the Abbey of St. Jean des Vignes, at Soissons, remarked that all the books in the library were still chained [†]. They were, moreover, protected by sentence of excommunication against all dilapidators; yet in certain cases the books might be borrowed for life [‡]; though Lupus, Abbot of Ferrers, would hardly have consented to this measure, judging from what he says in a letter to Hincmar. "The comment of Bede," he says, "on the Apostle, from the works of Augustin, I fear to send to you, because the book is so large that it cannot be concealed in the breast, nor can it be well contained in a sack, and the beauty of the codex is such, that if it were to fall into the hands of the wicked, it might be lost both for you and me [§]." The twenty-two volumes which John, Abbot of Cluny, left to that abbey were chained to the wall. Similarly the books which Octavianus Præconius, of the order of Minors, Archbishop of Palermo, placed in the hall of his palace, in order that persons who came to transact business might not pass any moments in idleness while waiting for their turn, were chained to the walls [||]. In Italy one still sees the chains attached to books in the libraries Laurenziana and Malatestiana.

But though wearing fetters, they were not imprisoned. Books, though now unchained, are not always so accessible as they were when the monks were their keepers. When I was at Amiens, the librarian told me that he had to spend that day in the market, and therefore could not open the cases of the precious books which had come from the Abbey of Corby. I could not refrain from expressing to him my regret that these treasures were not still in the hands of monks at Corby, though I should then have had to ride two leagues to see them. Truly I might have added, it would have been better to have had to speak to a Benedictine than to a corn-factor, or to the grenadier whom we find at the door of the Bourbon library at Naples.

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[*] Bibliothèque Hist. des Aut. de la Cong. de St. Maur. 22.

[†] Voyage Lit.

[‡] Hist. de Soissons, ii. 128.

[§] Lupi Epist. 76.

[||] Sicilia Sacra, i. 203.

In the middle ages there was more liberty of access to books. When Bessarion opened his library of St. Mark's church, he only forbad the removal of books beyond the city, and ordered that whoever was entrusted with a book within the city should deposit double its value. Antonio Agustin took a manuscript out of the Marziana library into Mendoza's house. Another was sent to him out of the public library in Florence*. When in some monasteries the effects of lending books were found so evil that the custom was prohibited, the council of Paris, in 1212, complained of the abbots who refused to lend books, and forbad them to pledge themselves in future to such refusals, "quum commodare inter præcipua misericordiæ opera computetur †."

Blume, after complaining of the ill-management and difficulties opposed to strangers in the capitular libraries, says, that in monasteries in the country he always met with the most obliging reception.

Nothing can be more affectionate than the terms with which monks of the middle ages invite visitors to their libraries. Lupus, Abbot of Ferrers, in the diocese of Sens, writes to the Abbot Altisigus, in the diocese of York, saying, that as every animal loves its like, so he desires to be united with him in friendship and sacred prayers, on account of their common studies of wisdom ‡. And the letter of Wibald, Abbot of new Corby, to the Archbishop of Bremen in 1151, is enough to excite the envy of many of our contemporaries. "It was gratifying to us," he says, "that you visited our brethren and consoled them: but I wish you would return and remain longer; and, as you promised, that you would turn over and search not alone the volumes of our shelves, but also the schedules. I wish that we may have this delight together, in peace, and quiet, and leisure; for what greater happiness in life § ?" These old writers accordingly are continually observing, that they have seen and read certain books in certain solemn monasteries, often in distant lands.

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* Ant. Aug. Opp. t. vii. p. 185.

† Annales de Phil. Chrét. tom. xviii. 450.

‡ Lupi Epist. lxii.

§ Ap. Martene, Vet. Script. ii. 424.

We find that the most delicate attention was inculcated by the monks from early time in the use of books. The rule of St. Pachomius enters into many details respecting their distribution and classification in the library, and the care to be taken of them; for instance, in not leaving them open when any one left his cell. The Coutumier of Cîteaux, speaking of the intervals of study, says, "If it be necessary to go any where, let the person to whom it was entrusted place it back in the drawer, or if he wish to leave it on his seat, let him make a sign to the brother sitting nearest him to guard it*." The rule of St. Isidore requires that the books should be returned every evening. The regulations of the library of the abbey of St. Victor, at Marseilles, are ordained expressly, as the statute of Mainerius, in 1198, states, with a view to extirpate the least root of dissension which might interrupt the unity and peace so necessary in all places, but so much more indispensable where the love of Christ causes many persons to dwell together under one roof †.

In respect to the care of books in the middle ages, we may form some idea of the prevailing manners from reading the curious instructions of Richard de Bury. "Not alone do we serve God," he says, "by preparing volumes of new books, but also by preserving and treating with great care those we have already. Truly after the vestments and vessels dedicated to our Lord's body, sacred books deserve to be treated with most reverence by clerks. In shutting and opening volumes they should observe a mature modesty, not too hastily loosing the clasps, nor failing to shut them when they have finished reading; for it is far more important to preserve a book than a shoe. The race of scholars requires to be bridled with the rules of elders; for some act with petulance and presumption, judging of things as if they had experience when they are void of it. You will see one youth lazily reclining over his studies, and in the winter season, when suffering from a sorry rheum, permitting drops from his nose to fall upon the page. I wish that such a scholar, instead of a book, may have to sit over leather with a shoemaker. He has a nail, too, like a giant's, with which he marks the margin of the passages that please him. He has, besides, innumerable straws, which he puts between the leaves to help his memory: these accumulate so as to swell the junctures of the binding, and there they are forgotten, and left to rot. He scruples not to eat fruit and cheese over the open book, and to pass the plate dissolutely over it, and, because he has no bag provided for alms, he commits the fragments to the book. What more shall I add? Leaning on his two elbows, he rests upon it, invites sleep, and doubles down the corners of the leaves, to their no small detriment. Then when the showers are passed, and the flowers have appeared in our land, this scholar, whom we describe, rather a neglector than an inspector of books, stuffs his book with the first violets and roses he can find, and turns over the leaves with hot hands, never thinking for a month to close the book, so that insects penetrate and eat into it, and at last it is so distended that one cannot shut it. There are impudent youths who will even make letters in books; so that wherever there is a broad margin you will find a monstrous alphabet, or something frivolous that occurred to their imagination, which immediately their unchastened pen presumed to put down. There are some thieves also who cut out leaves or letters, which kind of sacrilege ought to be prohibited under anathemas. An honest scholar will always wash his hands before taking up a book after dinner, and a crying child should never be suffered to admire the capital letters of books, lest his wet fingers should pollute the parchment; for he touches whatever he looks at. Moreover, laics, who handle a book turned upside down, as if properly directed, are altogether unworthy of having communion with books. In fine, all negligence in regard to books is excluded by the example of our Saviour; for when he had read from the book which was delivered to him, we read that he did not return it to the minister until he had closed it again with his most sacred hands; from which students ought to take example never to commit the least negligence with regard to books *."

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* Ap. Martene, Antiq. Monach. Rit. lib. i. c. 7.

† Ap. Martene, Vet. Script. i. p. 1020.

This minute attention to the preservation of books belonged not merely to such men as Richard de Bury,

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* Philobiblion, c. 17.

who used to breathe books, like Cato, whom Cicero describes sitting in the library of Lucullus, not so much reading as inhaling them: "quasi heluari libris videbatur *;" but also to all members of every religious community which had maintained its discipline. In the manuscripts executed by direction of Regimbert, librarian at Richenau, under the Abbots Wald, Heit, Erlbald, and Rudhelm, certain lines are generally inserted, which, after stating that he had procured these books for the use of the brethren, conclude thus:—

"Adjurat cunctos Domini per amabile nomen,
Hoc ut nullus opus cuiquam concesserit extra;
Ni prius ille fidem dederit, vel denique pignus
Donec ad has ædes quæ accepit salva remittat.
Dulcis amice gravem scribendi attende laborem:
Tolle, aperi, recita, ne lædas, claude, repone."

Hugo of St. Victor observes, that the resin of the cedar-wood is useful to preserve books; for that, when anointed with it, neither insects nor age can consume them †. The binding of books formed one occupation of the monks, to which much importance was attached. Although hunting had been interdicted to all ecclesiastics, by the councils of Agde in 506, Epon in 517, and of Pont Andemer in 1276,—which prohibition had been extended expressly to monks in the time of Charlemagne, and even to the Knight-Templars,—yet, under that emperor, liberty was given to the monks of St. Bertin at St. Omer, and of St. Denis, to hunt in their woods, in order to procure skins for binding their books ‡. Geoffroy, count of Anjou, founding a Benedictine house at Saintes, in 1047, gave to it the tenth of the deer on some lands in the Isle of Oleron, to supply covers for their books. At the abbey of Pfeffers, as elsewhere, it was the custom in time of war to conceal the library and the church treasure with such care, that only few persons knew the place. The consequence was, that, on their death, these valuable things were often lost. Accordingly, in the tenth century, under Abbot Ulrich,—and again in 1155, under Abbot Henry, —lost treasures of this kind were unexpectedly disco-

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* De Finibus, iii.

† Hugo de S. Vict. Institut. Monastic. lib. iii. c. 56.

‡ Chron. Monast. S. Bert. l. ix. ap. Martene Thes. Anec. iii.

vered. On the last occasion the convent came into possession of ten silver chalices, with vestments; and a rich library, containing,—besides missals, choral books, and works of the holy Fathers Augustin, Jerome, Gregory, Isidore, Bede, and Alcuin,—a vast collection of classical authors: "Virgil, Juvenal and Persius in one volume; Statius, Terence, Servius on the Bucolics, Lucan, Oratius, Salust, Sedulius, two books of Arator, Cato and Avianus; Waltar, Omerus, Fulgentius, and the Trojan history, Donatus, Theocritus, Topics of Tully, the Prædicamenta of Aristotle, two books of Porphyry, a book of Geometry; and the Cantica Canticorum, metrically and Teutonically composed *." It is remarkable that Richard de Bury, when enumerating the injuries caused to libraries by wars, cites only instances from heathen times. No doubt the monasteries, in Christian ages, preserved them from any wide destruction. Suffer they did, however, at times, as in the abbey of St. Salvator de Settimo, at Florence, which contained an immense library, from the ruins of which the celebrated Medicæan collections were formed or increased. "I remember," says Gaspar Jongellinus, "that, when living in that house, I used to wonder, on seeing how many volumes were covered with mud, and torn and defaced; but an old monk told me what he had heard from the ancient Fathers, that it was Florentine soldiers who had caused that destruction: for, being placed in ambush in the monastery, and sallying forth to repel the enemy from the walls, they had scarcely proceeded beyond the ditch, when the substructure failed; and there being a great confusion, in order to facilitate the return of those who were without, and who would otherwise have been slain in the trench, they took a quantity of books and made a bridge across with them, on which they passed back †."

But now we come to the place where so many of these volumes were written. On entering the Scriptorium, in the abbey of Fulda, you read this inscription:—

"Hic sedeant sacræ scribentes famina legis
Nec non sanctorum dicta sacrata patrum.
Hic interserere caveant sua frivola verbis,
Frivola, nec propter erret et ipsa manus.

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* Ildefons von Arx, i. 294.

† Notit. Abb. Ord. Cisterc. lib. vii. 38.

Correctosque sibi quærant studiose libellos
Tramite quo recto penna volantis eat.
Est labor egregius sacros jam scribere libros,
Nec mercede sua scriptor et ipse caret [*]."

An ancient manuscript in the library of Einsiedlin describes St. Gregory writing his dialogues with Petrus Diaconus, on the deeds of holy men in Italy, in the monastery which bears his name at Rome, to which he used to retire from the burden of the pontifical office. These are the lines:—

"Sanctorum veneranda cohors sedet ordine...
Divinæ legis Mystica dicta docens.
Hos inter residens Agapetus jure sacerdos
Codicibus pulchrum condidit arte locum.
Gratia par cunctis, sanctus labor omnibus unus,
Dissona verba quidem, sed tamen una fides [†]."

St. Gregory of Tours relates, that Leobardus the Recluse was frequently occupied in thus writing out books; and Sulpitius Severus says, that, in the greater monastery of St. Martin, no art was cultivated but that of writing, to which the younger were devoted, while their elders had leisure to pray. This, as Mabillon observes, was the great labour of the Benedictines, who thus transmitted the treasures of antiquity to our time [‡]. The Abbot Frederick of Hirschau, whom Trithemius styles the humblest of men, had his place and seat among the writers in the Scriptorium of that abbey, in nothing taking any distinction to himself [§].

The Scriptorium of monasteries used to be liberally endowed. Thus to that of St. Edmondsbury was assigned the profits of two mills; to that of Ely, the revenue of two churches; to that of St. Swithin at Winchester, the tithes of a valuable rectory. The art of transcribing manuscripts flourished till about a century before the discovery of printing. Heeren says, that by far the greatest number of corruptions in our manuscripts are to be ascribed to the negligence of writers during that interval; and that the care practised in the tenth and fourteenth centuries in transcribing is evident at the first glance *. Gerbert, in his history of the Black Forest, says, that, if there was nothing else, the beautiful writing of the tenth century, by means of which so many valuable monuments have been transmitted to us, ought to convince us that it was not a barbarous age. "Books were then so beautifully painted and embellished with emblems and miniatures, that the whole seemed to be the produce, not of human, but of angelic, hands. The fervour of abbots in that tenth century, in employing writers to preserve valuable books by multiplying copies, can never be sufficiently praised. Tangmar, in his life of St. Bernward, bishop of Hildesheim, says, that he established scriptoriums, not alone in the monasteries, but in divers places, by means of which he collected a copious library of books, both of divines and philosophers. In fact, the art of writing never attained to such perfection as in the ninth and tenth centuries; and all antiquarians will admit that the form—more or less elegant—of characters in the manuscripts of different ages places before our eyes the state of the sciences at that time, according as it was more or less flourishing †."

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[*] Schannat. Hist. Fuldensis, i.

[†] Annalium Camaldulensium lib. ii. 70.

[‡] Præf. in i. sæc. 9.

[§] Chronic. Hirsaug.

The same parchment was sometimes twice or thrice written upon; but if in this way many manuscripts of the fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries were destroyed, it is some excuse that the monks who did so only followed the example of the Romans, who had always observed this custom; and that from the time when men began to write books, with a separation between the words, it was thought fair, before the art of investigating antiquity was advanced, to put aside, as not fit for use, the Romish Merovingian and Scottish writings, in which all the words were joined together, and to make them serve for some other work.

Writing books was the main employment of the monks of St. Gall in the ninth and tenth centuries, to collate which they brought manuscripts from Italy and France; and this was the object of most of their epistolary correspondence. They wrote only on parchment, which, out of the hides of wild beasts, they manufactured with such skill, that it is often whiter and thinner than the finest post paper. In the beginning of the ninth century

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* Gesch. de Class. Lit. im Mittelalter, i. 372.

† Hist. Nigræ Silvæ, i. 162.

their writing was obscured by many Merovingian and Longobardish signs; but from 820 this cursive writing was generally laid aside for the Carlovingian Roman characters. The great antiquarians, Mabillon, Baluze, Basnage, Calmet, and Gerbert, found few manuscripts to equal in beauty those of St. Gall. They were the work of many hands. Some made the parchment, others drew the lines, others wrote the books, others put in the gold and the initial letters, others painted them, others compared the text with the original, which work was generally done by night in the Scriptorium between matins and lauds; and the last hands were employed in binding them within thick boards, cramped with iron, lead, or ivory. The best and most eminent writers of this time were Sintram, Folkard, Wolfkoz, Gotzbert, Bernwick, Alfart, Thiothard, Rifine, Wikram, St. Notker, Burgolf, Albrich, Egloff*. Writing was learned by the verse, every where known, containing nearly all the letters of the alphabet,

"Adnexique Globum Zephyrique Kanna secabant."

The labour was great, and Eadbert complains of it, saying, "Qui nescit scribere non putat esse laborem, tres enim digiti scribunt, totum corpus laborat†." They sought also to write without ink, and to engrave the letters on the parchment with a style, of which examples are found in the manuscripts of St. Gall ‡. Waldo, abbot of St. Gall, affirming something, says, "Never, while I have strength in these three fingers:" for he was an admirable writer, adds Ratpertus §. "All the Cisalpine world," says Ekkehard, "admires the fingers of our Sintram, who wrote out the Gospel which we possess. It is astonishing how one man could write out so many books, since we find works by him in most places of this kingdom. His writing was most delicate, yet you will rarely find that he had to erase one word in a page through any mistake ||." A book of the Gospels, in gold letters, by him, still exists. Almost every monastery in Germany could boast of having some book written by his hand.

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* Cartæ Traditionum, et Catalogus Mstorum S. Galli, sec. 9.

† Cod. MSS. 243.

‡ Ildefons von Arx.

§ Ratpert. de Origine S. Galli, ap. Goldast. Rer. Allem. i.

|| De Casibus S. Galli, ap. id.

In the manuscripts of the abbey of Tagernsee, in Bavaria, the names of monks who could write and illuminate best are recorded. Thus we read that Ellinger made a beautiful copy of Pliny's Natural History, with figures of the animals *. James the Florentine, a holy monk of St. Mary of the Angels at Florence, who died at an advanced age in 1396, was celebrated for his skill in writing the choral books. To him that house owed twenty of the finest that the world ever saw. He wrote others, which are found in Rome, and in the churches of St. Michael and of St. Matthias in Venice †. An old chronicler of the monastery of St. Riquier describes that pious community as similarly employed in the time of Robert, King of France. "Books of great science, excellent pearls," he says, "are now restored; while others are written out for the first time ‡."

Students of St. Gall, who had made some progress in the ars lineandi, were always employed in writing out books. When Ekkehard found any boys slow to study, he made them apply to writing: but there was a distinction made; for we read, "If the work be to write the Gospel, or a missal, let men of a perfect age write it with all diligence and attention §." The Irish monks seem to have brought with them into Germany the mode of writing on wax tablets; for, in the manuscripts of St. Gall, we read of pugilares Scotorum; that is, of the Irish, as is expressly stated in the Martyrology of Notker. The notes to these old manuscripts are curious. Thus on one we read, "Anteriora ægrè sunt correcta;" on another, which had been disfigured by the transcriber, "Diabolus fecit tam sanctam epistolam vitio scriptoris depravari ||." The copiers found their task laborious. One says, "Sicut ægrotus desiderat sanitatem, ita desiderat scriptor finem libri;" another writes in old German, "Written with great trouble;" another, "Libro completo saltat scriptor pede læto ¶." St. Notker writes of himself, "Nefas putavi, si illa enigmata Bibliothecæ S. Galli, cui Dei gratia multa accumulavi, scribere negligendo defraudaverim **." One is amazed at the labour of

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* Jaeck Gallerie der Klöster Deutschlands, i.

† Annal. Camald. lib. lvii.

‡ Lib. iv.

§ Capit. Caroli M. 789.

|| Cod. 6.

¶ Cod. N. 1019.

** In Cod. 14, p. 331.

their hands in this work. Dom Etiennot, who travelled so much to search the libraries of different abbeys, wrote out in the space of eleven years forty-five volumes in folio, containing the result of his researches *. The anonymous monk of Ratisbon says, "that, besides being occupied in the task of instruction, he wrote with his own hand not only books of his own composition, but also twenty missals, three books of the Gospels, two with the Epistles and Gospels, and four books of Matins †."

Harduin, who lived in a remote cell of the martyr Saturninus, built by the blessed Wandregisilus at Fontanelle, wrote with his own hand four volumes of the Evangelists in Roman letters; one volume of St. Paul's Epistles; three volumes of Sacramentaria; one of readings from the Gospels; one containing forty homilies of Pope Gregory; a book of Arithmetic, with letters concerning the Paschal time; one volume, containing from the eleventh to the eighteenth book of St. Augustin, De Civitate Dei; one of Venerable Bede,—"De Naturis rerum ac temporibus;" one of a Psalter, with the Ambrosian Hymns; one of the lives of St. Wandregisile, St. Ansbert, and St. Wolfrann; one volume of Questions of St. Ansbert to Siwinum, a recluse; and one Antiphonarium ‡. Maurus Lapi, a Florentine monk of Camaldoli, while living nine years in the desert, and more than forty-six in the monastery of St. Matthias de Muriano, read and wrote out more than 1000 manuscripts; the list of which, including the most excellent works of the middle ages, shows that he could make a good choice of authors §. Gerhard of Monte Sereno, though having a defect in his sight, wrote out six Missals, one Plenarium, one Lectionarium, four Graduals, one Antiphonarium, two books of Homilies, two Passionals, four books of Morals, and two Matutinals ||. Prodigious is the number of books which Trithemius says he has written during the twenty-three years of his being abbot at Spanheim ¶.

Again, to remark the spirit with which the monks pursued these labours. Let us hear a monk of the abbey of

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* Bibliot. Hist. de la Cong. de S. Maur.

† Ap. Mab. Vet. Analecta, 119.

‡ Chronic. Fontanellense, ap. Dacher. Spicileg. iii.

§ Annal. Camaldulens. 67.

|| Chronic. Montis Sereni.

¶ Nepiachus.

Morigni: "May God reward all constructors, enlargers, and protectors of this place, and have mercy on them; on me also, Teulfus, who have written these things, and who know not whether I have done it any service, excepting that I have, to the best of my power, corrected and accentuated the whole Bible from Genesis to the last Epistle of Paul; St. Augustine, from his book, De Trinitate Dei, till that of John, the Morals of Gregory, and other works—who for a long time was precentor, and afterwards attempted to be prior; but to govern as was required, partly through ignorance, partly through negligence, partly through infirmity, not of body but of manners, I could not. You who read this, I beseech, by the sweet name of my Lord Jesus Christ, to say, with all the affection you can, 'O God, merciful by nature, who showest mercy and hast pity upon all, show mercy, I pray, to Teulfus, unworthy of thy mercy.' But if you shut your bowels against me, and turn a deaf ear to my prayer, you will sin, both against God, who is charity, and against me *."

In the silence of their cells these men rejoiced in the thought that they could, by the labour of their pens, preach to the human race. "Happy intention," cries Cassiodorus to his monks, alluding to those who transcribed the ancient books, "praiseworthy assiduity, by the hand to preach to men, by the fingers to open the lips, in silence to give salvation to men, and with a pen to fight against the unlawful suggestions of the devil; for Satan receives as many wounds as the writer puts down words of the Lord. Resting in the one place he goes, by means of the dissemination of his work, through different provinces; his labour is read in holy places; the people learn from it how they may be converted from an evil will to serve God with a clean heart." Peter, the venerable abbot of Cluny, speaks in the same manner to Gislebert the recluse.

In a manuscript of St. Augustin on the Psalms, by the monk Radulf, in the abbey of St. Vaast at Arras, are verses relating what was the hope of the writer; for he says, that as many sins would be forgiven him, as he had written words in that book †. In Arnesberg, a

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* Chronicon Mauriniacense ap. Duchesne, tom. iv.

† Martene, Voyage, lib. 64.

monastery of Præmonstré, as I heard from a priest of that congregation," says Cæsar of Hiesterbach, "there was a certain writer, named Richard, an Englishman, whose tomb was opened twenty years after he had lain in it, when his right hand was found whole and flexible, as if cut off from a live body, while all the rest was in ashes. It was a hand ever directed by charity. It is still preserved in that house *."

Having already in the third book gone over much of this ground, I pass on now as rapidly as I can; but it is impossible to visit monasteries, and omit all mention of some of the most remarkable features in their history.

The first institutors of the monastic life were pious men, who made more account of sanctity than of learning. "Monachus non docentis, sed plangentis habet officium," are the words of St. Jerome, adopted by the Cistercian order for its motto. To grieve, not to teach, was their office. This made St. Augustin exclaim, in allusion to St. Anthony, that the unlearned rise up and take heaven by force, while we with our learning are sinking to perdition †. St. Anthony had no admiration for learned men, and he used to say that a sound mind was more ancient than all the wisdom of letters. A certain philosopher, expressing surprise how he could persist in the monastic life without the consolation of books, he replied, "Nature is my book; for in all parts of the creation I read the oracles of God." The beginning of the book of St. Gregory of Tours, De Virtutibus et Miraculis, will show with what mind these monks withdrew from the study of profane literature, though it is true this holy man evinces his acquaintance with heathen literature in the very words with which he declares his sense of its vanity. All through the ages of faith men made more account of piety than of learning, according to the words, "Better is an humble rustic who serves God than a proud philosopher who neglects himself, while considering the course of the heavens;" and so also St. Hilary says, "Meditatio legis non solum in verbis legendi est, sed in opere et religione ‡."

Hear the words of monks most devoted to classical learning. "Those who live ill, and wish to speak well,

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* Illust. Mir. xii.

† Confess. viii. 8.

‡ In Psal. i.

and despise faulty language rather than corrupt manners, are thus instructed," says Lupus, Abbot of Ferrers: "Omnis labor hominis in ore ejus, et anima illius non replebitur:" "for it is just that he who attributes the first place to learning, and not to sanctity, should be excluded in a destructive fast from the refection of wisdom *."

"Though you ask for the books of Tully, yet I know that you are a Christian, not a Ciceronian; for you only pass into foreign camps as a spy." So writes, in 1150, the superior of an abbey in Hildesheim to Wibald, Abbot of New Corby, who replies to him: "You judged rightly of us: the dishes of Cicero we do not serve among the first, or to the chief table; but when replenished with better food, we partake of them as of the sweet meats which were served for the desert."

Mabillon shows the error of some in the last century, who supposed that monasteries were instituted for the purpose of cultivating human science: for they who entered them generally counted sciences along with the other secular things which they abandoned for the love of Christ †. But, at the same time, he proves with what assiduity, as well as humility, studies were recommended within cloisters, under the influence of religion ‡.

Cosma the Scholastic had more books than any one else in Alexandria, and he used willingly to lend them to any one who asked him; and you saw nothing with him but books and benches, a bed and a table; "and whenever I went to see him," says Sophronius, "I used to find him either reading or writing §."

In the time of Charlemagne there were opened many schools for the Greek. "Do not wonder," says a monk, "that the Abbot Hermann should have carried a Greek Testament always with him; for this learned and religious prior was skilled in the Greek tongue, which he had learned in the Caroline College at Osnaburg; for in that foundation all the clergy were skilled in both Greek and Latin ||." Long before, St. Cæsarius of Arles used to

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* Lupi Epist. xxxv.

† Tract. de Studiis Monast. pt. i. c. i.

‡ Ib. ii.

§ Pratum Spirituale, c. 172.

|| Chronic. Cœnobii Virgin. Ottberg. ap. Paulini Rer. et Antiq. German. Syntag.

celebrate the Divine worship in Greek as well as in Latin. The king, Charles, wished to make Compiegne a second Constantinople, and gave it the name of Καρλόπολις, and to a new founded abbey in Burgundy he gave the name of Alpha. This Græcomania shows that the language was much cultivated then. In the tenth century, at St. Martial of Limoges, it was the custom on Easter-day to sing the Gloria, Sanctus, and Agnus Dei, in Greek. At Auriol, near Marseille, there was a company of Greek monks. In 1167, William, who from a physician had become a monk, brought Greek books to Paris from Constantinople *, which greatly excited the interest of the learned. Philip Augustus founded a Collegium Constantinopolitanum for young Greeks; and the Dominican and Franciscan orders applied with diligence to the same study. The first who gave a translation from the Greek of Aristotle's Morals was Robert, Bishop of Lincoln, in the thirteenth century. At this time many eminent Grecians flourished; as William of Morbeka, Thomas Cantiprantanus, Henry of Brabant, Bartholomew of Messina, Eugenius Ammiratus, and James of Venice †.

I am aware that some modern writers are of opinion that the monks, by preserving and cultivating the ancient learning, only retarded what they term the progress of the human mind. Capefigue says that their literature repressed the nerve, so French and so national, of the troubadours ‡. But it may be a question to be referred to others, whether the instantaneous development of their first thoughts, however French or elsewhere national, is always a mode of advancing the intelligence of men. Eurymachus, indeed, is very anxious, like most of Homer's heroes, to express whatever comes uppermost,

——— κέκλυτέ μεν, μνηστῆρες,
ὄφρ' εἴπω τά με θυμὸς ἐνὶ στήθεσσι κελεύει §.

But perhaps it was quite as well that the monks, instead of encouraging the barbarians around them to utter in verse whatever their minds first called on them to

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* Chronic. de S. Denis, ad ann. 1167.

† Staudenmaier Johan Scotus und die Weissenschaften Seiner Zeit.

‡ Hist. de Phil. August. ii. 190.

§ xviii. 351.

say, invited them to their schools, where they learned to hear a little before they expressed themselves.

In these isolated monasteries of the middle ages, so wild in their situation and so solemn in their structure, were found men of profound learning, as well as in the heart of cities, who were known to their contemporaries as lights both for divine and human studies; as Thomas of St. Victor is described—

> "Est lux æterna Thomæ collata Priori
> Qui meruit martyr juris amore mori *."

The early monks did not disdain the ancient learning, for we know that the missionaries of St. Gregory brought a Homer with them to England, and Raban Maur is commemorated as having first brought Greek literature to the Germans †. In the ninth and tenth centuries the monks of St. Gall could understand, read, and write the German, Latin, and Greek tongues; they were skilled as orators, astronomers, physicians, expounders of the sacred Scripture, in all history, and in classical literature. Those most versed in Greek were termed the Greek Brothers—fratres Ellenici. The professors held an epistolary correspondence with the court and the learned men of the age, and were often called to occupy distant sees. The monks of St. Gall were among the first to form the German into a written language; for it was not till the ninth century that it could be written. Part of the rule of St. Benedict, with the Pater noster, Credo, and Confiteor, translated into German, were the first examples, and these were written in the Greek and Runic alphabet of the Latin characters. Rapert, one of these in the ninth century, composed in German a popular hymn in honour of St. Gall. In France Orderic Vitalis particularly notices the monks of Bec as devoting themselves to the study of letters. "Such zeal did they show," he says, "in extending the sacred mysteries and in useful discourse, that almost all seemed to be philosophers, while those who were illiterate, called Rustics, might learn grammar from them." But all the greater houses contained men of eminent learning down to the latest times, when the Benedictine order gave to the republic of letters Ménard, Mabillon, Montfaucon,

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* Bulæus Hist. Univ. par. ii.

† F. Cornelii Monach. Breviar. Fuldense Historicum.

d'Acheri, Gallois, Delfau, Massuet, Bulteau, Gerberon, Gesvres, Lami, Garnier, Roussel, and Ruinart. The Mendicant orders produced also men of most profound erudition. Joseph Scaliger writing to Isaac Casaubon tells him to search in the king's library for some notes of a Dominican friar on the Alcoran, which will greatly assist his studies, and without which he will find obscurities that will be inexplicable. The English Franciscans were especially learned towards the end of the thirteenth century. Then shone Rodulph Coleburg, Roger Bacon, Henry Willot, Thomas Docking of Norfolk, Richard Rufus, Adam de Marisco, William of Ware, John Walleis, John of London,—who followed Roger Bacon to Paris, and, having been sent by him to Rome, was retained there by Pope Innocent,—Robert Crusius, and Richard Middleton, the last of whom is commemorated with fourteen other chief doctors of his order on the tomb of Dun Scotus at Cologne *.

Though we before visited the schools of the middle ages, we cannot refuse to take another glance at them, being now within the very walls where the greatest were established; and from the library and scriptorium we are naturally directed to the Scholastic Halls, so appropriately placed within the asylums of peace, as the very word Scholastic indicates, for it implies leisure from external material things, to be free to study as to adore God. These forests and valleys through which we have lately penetrated might have been designated in the middle ages as the studious walks and shades, the schools of sages. In the tenth century, when St. Wolfgang retired to Einsidlen, that solitary monastery was embosomed in a vast forest, and yet crowds of pupils came there to its schools from all the neighbouring provinces. In every abbey there was a professor of theology and of philosophy. How strange it sounds now to hear of a Dom Badier professing philosophy at St. Denis, and of a Dom Lopin teaching philosophy on Mount St. Michael in Normandy, places in our ears only associated with the thought of barracks and state prisoners, who have no other idea of philosophy besides the revolt of the intelligence against God. The monasteries were schools of theology, philosophy, of languages, of writing, of art,

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* Wadding, Ann. Minorum, iv. v. vi.

and of law; for there too men "spent their youth in flowing gown, studying their Ulpian." In the time of Charlemagne letters as well as theology were taught in cloisters before numerous disciples; and in cities studious youths were permitted to assist at the lectures without being inhabitants of the monastery. Down to the seventeenth century the monks permitted laics to attend the scholastic classes of their novices *, and these were sometimes far advanced in age; for one result of the monastic influence was to convince men that, as Clement Alexandrensis says, "no time could be unseasonable when it was a question of giving health to the soul, that it could never be too soon or too late to philosophize, as it could never be too soon or too late to be happy: that both young and old must philosophize; that the old may grow young again through the good things which come to them from grace, and that the young may be at the same time both young and old through confidence in the future †."

The ancient pulpits of philosophy existed in France till the revolution. Every monastery maintained some learned men to give public instruction; "and it is worthy of remark," says Conringius, "that in the sixth, seventh, and eighth centuries, throughout the whole western church, there was no one distinguished by his writings who had not been educated in a monastery ‡." An historian of Ireland observes, "that the rapidity with which the schools of the monasteries rose from their ashes after being burnt by the northmen, and resounded afresh with the voice of instruction, seems hardly less than marvellous. Only a few months after a desperate inroad of Danes into Armagh, we are told of a youth of royal blood repairing to its schools for the completion of his education." In England, after the coming of the Normans, every monastery had a public school; and where funds could not immediately be found, barns were hired for the purpose, where the teachers gratuitously attended. Thus in the time of Joffred, abbot of Croyland, four monks from Cotenham used to walk to Cambridge to give gratuitous lessons, one day on Latin literature, another on Aristotle according to the com-

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* Monteil, Hist. des François, viii. 544. † Stromat. iv. 9.

‡ De Antiquitatibus Academicis.

ments of Porphyry and Averroes, another on Rhetoric, from Cicero and Quintilian, another on the Scriptures and the holy Fathers. Paris owes its extension on the north bank of the Seine to the school of the abbey of St. Germain l'Auxerrois, which was celebrated in an early age. The school even in the nuns' convent of Chelle near Paris, in the time of the Merovingians, was resorted to by crowds of both sexes to hear the scriptural lectures of St. Bertilla. The ardour for study in the middle ages was not left without abundant means to carry it into effect. Instruction was widely diffused, and the idea of converting it into a monopoly never entered into the imagination of the monks. "This year, 961," say the annals of Corby in Saxony, "the school in the new church flourished as if contending with ours. Thus the mother loves the daughter, and the daughter honours the mother [*]." In the neighbourhood of St. Gall there were schools founded by the counts of Raperschwil, which the monks of course favoured, as they did every useful institution [†]; but it was in consequence of the tendency which schools of this kind naturally indicated, that Pope Alexander III. wrote to all the French bishops charging them to forbid the masters to receive money, "lest science should seem to be exposed for sale, which ought to be offered to every one gratis [‡]."

On the other hand, there was a certain race of wandering scholars lying out in the fields, who used to beg from monasteries with insolence, against whom it was sometimes necessary to pass decrees, as in the council of Salzburg in 1292, and also in 1456 [§]. All studies in the monasteries yielded to the labour of instruction. Abbon, the monk of the ninth century, who wrote the poem on the siege of Paris, begs indulgence for the faults in it, which he has not had time to correct, "ob scholarum pluralitatem."

Of the facility afforded to the poor of educating their sons by the schools of the monks, the history of Pope Sylvester II. furnished a memorable example. Born in the mountains of Auvergne of poor parents, the brethren of the monastery of the holy Geraldus at Aurillac took the destitute lad under their protection. The Abbot Gerald, the scholastic Raimund, the monks Bernhard, Airard, and all the rest, showed him a father's love; but especially under the instruction of Raimund were his extraordinary talents developed. After some time the brethren, with praiseworthy disregard of all selfish interests, sent him to travel, in order that he might find fresh food for his genius, and visit other schools. He first visited all the celebrated abbeys of France; in each of which he formed friendships, which proved the consolation of his future life; so that, when subsequently he passed into Spain and Italy, he was united in intimacy with Adalbero of Rheims, Notger of Luttich, Ecbert of Treves, Eccard, Abbot of St. Julian at Tours, Adson of Moutier-on-Der, Constantine, scholastic at Fleury, and with many other noble and learned monks*.

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[*] Ap. Leibnitz Script. Bruns. iii.

[†] Ildefons. von Arx.

[‡] Ap. Martene Vet. Script. ii. 853.

[§] Germania Sacra, ii. 331.

Besides the greater there were lesser schools adjoining every monastery for the children of the neighbourhood. Hence the old chronicler of St. Riquier, after stating that boys are educated there, adds, "The treasures of wisdom are dispersed on all sides; the country is rendered illustrious, and every where, and by all men, Centula is called happy †."

"After the pestilence in 1348 there was such a scarcity of men," says a chronicle of Soissons, "that no one could be found in the small towns to teach little children to read." Therefore, foundations were made by John Dumont for sending scholars to one or other of the five universities ‡. The decay of schools, and the consequent want of instruction among the people, previous to the great outbreak of heresy in the time of Luther, explained the desolation which ensued in some countries, as St. Vincent Ferrer clearly pointed out; and, in fact, where education was most extended, as in Spain and Italy, during the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, these errors were not able to penetrate or take root §.

It would be long to tell of the great monastic schools which diffused such light throughout Europe during the middle ages. In the tenth century the most celebrated were Lobbes, where Rather, and Gorcum, where John Vendieres taught, Gemblours, Prum, St. Martin at

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* Hock, 61.

† Lib. iv.

‡ Hist. de Soissons, ii. 211.

§ Monteil Hist. des François, viii. 564.

Tours, St. Germain at Paris, Fulda, Hirschfeld, Fleury, Luxeuil, St. Boniface at Rome, Monte Cassino. In that age flourished the great monastic schools of St. Gall, Reichenau, Einsiedelin, Peterlingen, Cluny, and among the mountains of Auvergne the cloister of Aurillac at the end of the ninth century, founded by the holy Geraldus,—St. Vincent at Toul, St. Felix and Clemens at Metz, and St. Remi at Rheims [*]. Celebrated also were the monastic schools of St. Alban in Mayence, where the monks Theodorich and Dietmar flourished; of Hirschau, where studied Arnulf, Adalbert, and Meginrad, renowned through all Germany; of Corby, in Saxony, where the scholastic was the celebrated Wittichind; and of the abbey of St. Maximin at Treves, which produced at the same time many most eminent men, apostles and martyrs. So again, on the Danube, that of St. Blaze, in the Black Forest, founded in 960 by Reginbert, a nobleman of the court, was distinguished; as was also Braunau, where the holy Austrik began his apostolic course.

At Montfaucon, on the borders of Lorraine, there were, in 914, learned monks, who had fled from England, and a famous school. At Castres, in Rovergne, the Abbot Durandus deserved immortality by his writings on theology and history. At the close of the tenth century were founded the abbeys of St. Peter in Bisuldum, in the diocese of Girona; St. Mary, in Taxo, in the diocese of Urgel; and St. Michael, at Cusan, in the Pyrenees; which contained most eminent schools under the abbots Pontius, Gondefred, and Guarinus; to the last of which came Peter Urseoli, the Doge of Venice, with his friends Gradenigo, Mauroseni, and Romuald, the subsequent founder of Camaldoli, and the old hermit Marinus [†]. In the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries the great schools of the Franciscans and Dominicans drew multitudes to their convents. More than 700 friars at a time, from every part of Christendom, have been known to resort to the Franciscan convent in Paris for the sake of study [‡]. The scholastic halls in this convent were particularly grand. The greater schools were not exceeded by any others in the university. They were seventy-six feet long and forty-six broad, with eleven great windows. There were two lectures on theology, speculative and interrogative, every morning, and two every afternoon, on the Holy Scriptures. Daily, from four to five in the evening, the fathers used to dispute on these lectures, any one that chose answering and disputing against them. 222 youths were educated in the seminary, which contained an elegant hall, in which two of the younger brethren repeated parts of the divine office every night; but on festivals all were required to be present in the church at the same time. Here were four schools; one for grammar, another for rhetoric, another for logic, and the fourth for the master of the sentences and the physics of Aristotle *.

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[*] Hock, Gerbert und Seinjahrhundert, 33.

[†] Ib. 54.

[‡] Duchesne, Antiquités des Villes de France.

Thus, reader, after a long interval here we find ourselves again raising our hands in admiration of the mere names of the monastic schools of the middle ages? Again, I ask, what must it have been to have entered that of the abbey of St. Victor at Paris, when it contained such masters as Hugo, Adam, and the two Richards? How deeply interesting even now is it to visit the monastery of St. Dominic at Naples, one of those great schools whose masters possessed such an empire! St. Thomas of Aquin composed here many of his works, and here he taught theology during fifteen months. At a later time King Alphonso I. of Arragon used often to come here on horseback, to assist at the lectures of the professors. The traces of St. Thomas meet you at every step. You see his small cell, now a chapel, his class, and the remains of his chair. Of the great men who presided over the school of St. Gall, in regard to poetry, music, and painting, I shall have occasion to speak hereafter. In learning, they held the first place. When Eckehard II. entered the council of Mayence, six bishops rose up to salute him as their old master in the school of this abbey †.

Through the ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries, all the masters were great men. The Emperor Otho I. would do nothing without the advice of Eckehard I. sister's son of the recluse Rachild. He was the most learned and magnanimous man of his age, and the most

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* Wadding. An. 1234.

† De Casibus S. Galli, ap. Goldast. ii.

pitiful to the poor. He left behind him a description of the heroic deeds of Walter, which Eckehard IV. afterwards copied out in a more complete form, and styled "Lydius Charlomanicus." In pursuance of a vow, he had begun to write also a life of St. Wiborad. Eckehard II. Palatinus was a stately and most noble person: "nemini unquam Benedicti cucullus decentius insederat." He made no distinction between the noble and other students, but employed those of least talent more in writing, painting, and gilding. He knew how to write down in short hand the substance of every thing that was said, as soon as it was uttered. He was subsequently called to the court of Otho I., and appointed over the imperial chapel. Two discourses, which he had taken down in short hand, still exist, which Eckehard IV. has inserted in his chronicle. Eckehard IV. composed an emblem to express each of the arts, with its attributes. Notker, the physician, was maternal uncle of the Abbot Notker: he was skilled in medicine above all other men of his age, and was held in great respect at the court of Otho I. Curious proofs of his discernment are recorded. So strict a disciplinarian was he in the cloister, that he was surnamed "Piperis granum." In old age he lost his sight. The veneration of his contemporaries is well expressed in the notice of his death: "Obiit Notkeri benignissimi doctoris et medici *." Notker Labeo, or the "thick-lipped," was considered the most learned man of his time, as well as the most benign †. He was a profound theologian, astronomer, and mathematician, deeply versed in the Greek and Latin and German tongues. He acquired from his contemporaries immense applause by his works on the German tongue, and his name will be for ever dear and venerable to all who study the old German literature. He formed many learned men; and amongst them Eckehard IV., a classical author of the middle ages. On his death-bed he commanded that the indigent should have a dinner in his presence, that he might use his eyes for the last time in seeing the pleasure which they received. This joy was granted to him. They dined before his bed, and he expired amidst the tears and lamentations of the poor. He died in the seventy-sixth year of his age, in 1022, of the plague

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* Necrolog.

† Chronic. Hepidanni ad an. 1022.

which the army had brought out of Italy. His disciple, Eckehard IV., concludes his account of him with these words:—

> "Hic finis est hominis post imparis eruditionis,
> Hunc merito flebunt, simili, qui deinde carebunt [*]."

Of his German works, there remain his translation of the Psalms, of Aristotle, Boetius, Martianus Capella, and a short treatise on musical instruments. His translations of Job and of St. Gregory's Morals are lost. On the same day with him died, of the plague, three other professors: Rudpert, Anno, and Erimbert, who were all placed in one grave. Eckehard IV. was also a great proficient in the German, Latin, and Greek tongues, profoundly versed in heathen and Christian antiquities. He published the chronicle of his house, from the time of the Abbot Salomon to that of Immo: a work of high value, not only for the history of Germany, but for that of all Europe. His second work is the celebrated manuscript, "Liber Benedictionum [†]," or the poetry of the mysteries and the festivals, with paintings, and containing benedictions for different occasions. He died in 1070.

The Latin tongue was so thoroughly taught in the school of this abbey, that, in the readings which were always made at table, no fault was ever observable. Excepting the smaller boys, no student ever dared to speak in any other tongue but Latin. No where else, in all Germany, did one write such good Latin: and treatises were written here at once in Latin, and not, as elsewhere, translated into it from the German [‡]. In general, the method of instruction in the monasteries of the middle ages was so successful, that John of Salisbury says, that every one, who is not absolutely deficient in natural abilities, can learn to write and speak Latin perfectly in one year [§]. The professors of St. Gall explained Cicero, Quintilian, Virgil, Lucan, Flaccus, and Statius; and gave their scholars to read Sallust, Livy, Trogo, Frontinus, Solinus, Varro, Juvenal, Terence, Persius, and Sophocles. The subjects for their poetry were generally taken out of the Bible, or Church history, legends, and pieces for festivals. The declamation proper for poetry was indicated to the reader by musical notes, of which the manuscript poems of Sedulius and Adelhelm are an example *. In dialectics and logic their masters were Aristotle, Plato, Porphyrius, and Boetius. Notker Labeo, the thick-lipped, wrote a translation, in German, of Aristotle's Logic. Music was taught with great care. They studied also mathematics and geometry; and Notker Labeo drew mathematical figures for the students, and explained in German the meaning of the different terms. According to them, the patriarch Abraham was the inventor of these figures. In astronomy, which they named "astrology," they did not confine their researches to the constellations and course of the sun. They sought also to use the telescope and the astrolabe, and were able to make a celestial globe, perhaps the first that was ever seen in Germany. Their astronomical guides were Alexander, Higius, and Aratus. They held Zoroaster, whose kingdom they said was Bactria, to be the greatest astronomer, and King Ptolemy, as the inventor of the sun's hours, and of the astrolabe—an astronomical instrument which the painters at that time used as an emblem of magic. Such diligent readers were they of the classics, that they often used the ancient terms, and applied them to contemporary things. Thus the Christian Church was "Senatus populusque, Respublica." They borrowed figures, in speaking, from the ancient history, and styled St. Gall "Prætor," and "Censor." Above all, they were assiduous in studying the Holy Scriptures, and the Fathers, especially Origen, Athanasius, Augustin, Jerome, Gregory, Isidore, Chrysostom, Bede, Sedulius, Boetius, Avitus, Primasius, and the ecclesiastical historians. Their philosophic views were often expressed in verse: as for instance, of prayer, they said,—

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[*] In Lib. Bened.

[†] In Cod. MSS. No. 393, in 4to, of 263 pages.

[‡] Eckehard in Cas. xi.

[§] Metalog. i. 24.

"Precibus Deus non mutatur, præsciens earum operatur."

Of penance,—

"Vult velut ignarus Deus, ut fatearis amarus.
Intime salvamur si continue fateamur."

They had some strange notions: as, for instance, that the letters of the language which Adam and the serpent spoke

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* In Cod. 242.

had a magical power. As for science, in opposition to religion, the monks of St. Gall held that religion must always be regarded as far elevated above all sciences; though science and learning must be used in its defence, after the example of St. Athanasius, Augustin, and Boetius. Besides the study of the ancients, the vulgar tongue was by no means neglected at St. Gall: the monks applied themselves with diligence to its formation, and made it the object of study.

"Primus Barbaricam scribens, faciensque saporam," says Eckehard IV.*; and Rudpert wrote a German grammar, explaining scientific words†. In the German writings of their composition we find an elegance which was then new: so that more was effected towards its refinement in the ninth, tenth, and eleventh centuries, than was done during the seven hundred years following: and Ildefons von Arx says, that no German can fail to regret bitterly that these old masters of the tongue should have been laid aside by those who, of late years, have sought to improve it. We may remark, indeed, that every where the monks laboured in their schools to preserve the popular language of the country in which they were. In England, when, under the severe ordinances of the Normans, the old Saxon characters seemed about to be lost, there were patriots in the monasteries, says a late writer, who preferred them still; and we are indebted to such men for their preservation. Ingulfus was one. Bewailing the loss of many of his charters in the fire of 1091, "a few years before," he says, "I had given several out of the treasury, of which we had duplicates, that they might be kept in the cloister for teaching the juniors the Saxon hand. Having been long slighted because of the Normans, it had become unknown, except by a few of the seniors; the juniors, therefore, were instructed to read the old letter, that they might understand and maintain our charters when they grew old."

But, to return to St. Gall: so general were the studies, that Abbot Ulrick VIII.'s cook, Hans Rimel, and his porter, Laurence Teusch, could both speak Latin, Greek, and Hebrew, besides being skilled in many branches of science. The grand days of this abbey ended with the thirteenth century; for, in the fourteenth, the secular nobility superseded the monks, and every thing sunk to the lowest ebb. A great reform, however, again took place: for, in the seventeenth century, most of the Swiss abbeys sent their novices and younger members to study in the abbey of St. Gall, to which many abbots applied for monks, in order to restore the discipline of their own houses. Of other great monastic schools, similar details might be produced.

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* In Lib. Bened. 155.

† Goldast. Rer. Allemann. tom. ii.

Wibald, abbot of Corby, in 1149, writing to Manegold, master of the school, concerning the great men who have benefited the Church by their writings, cites Bede, and Ambrose, Heimon, Antpert, Raban, John Scott, and others, whose works we read. He says, also, that we should study Pythagoras, Plato, Sophocles, and Simonides *. In the ninth century, the school of the monastery of Hirschau possessed those great professors, Ruthard, Richbod, and Harderad; of the last of whom we read,—"a great doctor, and famous throughout the world; dear to kings, and most dear to his own; in life and erudition most eminent †." In the abbey of Tagernsee was perhaps the oldest school in Bavaria. Here flourished many learned men. Werinher was celebrated as a teacher. The Greek, Latin, and Hebrew tongues were cultivated in it with success; and botanical studies were assisted by a garden provided for the purpose ‡.

This union of scholastic instruction with religious education in the monasteries of the middle ages was conformable to the judgment and practice of all Christian antiquity: "Sapientia," says Lactantius, "cum religione inseparabili nexu cohæret §." Schools were, therefore, attached to the residence of bishops, and to every church. Hence we read of Wilfrid, the holy bishop of York, that great men committed their sons to be educated by him, whether they intended to militate for the Lord or for the world ||;

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* Ap. Martene, Vet. Script. xi. 334.

† Gerbert, Hist. Nigræ Silvæ.

‡ Jaeck Gallerie der Klöster Deutschlands, i.

§ Lib. iv. c. 3.

|| Will. Malmes. de Gestis Pont. Anglor. iii.

and of Egbert, of the same see, in the words ascribed to Alcuin:—

> "Indolis egregiæ juvenes quoscunque videbat
> Hos sibi conjunxit, docuit, nutrivit, amavit *."

The monks, however, dwelling within vast abbeys in the country, and surrounded with every thing favourable to study, were, in a still more especial manner, the instructors to whom men most desired to commit their sons; and certainly they did not betray the trust reposed in them. In their cloisters the wish of St. Clement of Alexandria was realized: men honoured the young, and supplied them with the education of God—*τὴν παιδείαν τοῦ Θεοῦ* †. When Abelard, in the abbey of St. Denis, composed that learned poem in elegiac verse, in which he lays down the best rules to lead a holy and learned life, uniting piety and study, he did but explain the monastic education in general. "The schools in the monasteries," says a great professor of the Academy of Paris, "were more than schools of learning: they were, in a high sense, schools; for the moral faculties were singularly well cultivated. The great originality of the middle ages was this cultivation of self-knowledge. Less inventive than antiquity, these ages did nothing but study man. Thus theology itself was the study of man: for the relations of God with man required that study ‡. "The first instruction for youth," says Bonald, "that of which it is not given to man to appreciate the value, or to estimate the influence, consists in habits, rather than in reasonings; in examples, rather than in direct lessons §." This was supplied in the monastic schools; where the duties of life according to the law of God, not the metaphysical theories of heathen, or the subtleties of a later philosophy, were to be the chief subjects attended to ||. "You have sent your two nephews to be instructed by me," writes Peter of Blois, "the one a boy, the other a youth; and you say that the latter has a great genius, and that you never met with any one of a more subtle vein; and this, because, omitting the study of authors, he has fled at once to the intricacies of the logicians. But I believe the result will not be exactly what you

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* Alcuini Poema de Pont. Eccles. Eborac.

† Stromat. iv. 17.

‡ Michelet.

§ Législation Prim. iii. 40.

|| Petr. Bles. Serm. 29.

suppose. Not in such things is the foundation of learning; and, to many, pernicious is that subtlety which you extol. For what does it avail to spend his days on things which can never profit him, either at home or abroad, in the forum or in the cloister, in the court or in the Church, or any where but in the schools? What is more sharp than the beard of corn?—and yet what is it good for? Such is the genius which is all subtlety, without gravity. Do not, therefore, allege any more the subtle vein of your William: for I fear I shall only have twice the labour with him; since I must first eradicate what has taken root in him. If John only perseveres in his disposition, the younger will supplant the elder,—Jacob, Esau *." As Trithemius says of St. Bonaventura, "The monks taught and explained the whole sacred Scripture and theology: teaching with a certain spiritual sweetness, they delighted—and, with delight, they moved and inflamed the affections of their auditors." All that our wisest poets wished that youth might obtain was granted here; and Cowper himself would find his fondest speculations realized. "When I was seven years old," says Bede, "I was given to be educated to the most reverend Abbot Benedict, and then to Ceolfrid; and thenceforth my whole time was spent in meditating the Scriptures, and observing the regular discipline and singing in the church: and I found it sweet to be always either learning, or teaching, or writing." To the wisdom of this training the most learned men of later times subscribed, when the Jesuits instituted their last noviciate, or year of retreat, to repair the breaches which an application to human sciences might have caused in the soul.

When the system of the ages of faith was yielding to that which now prevails, there were not wanting voices from the cloister, like that of Savonarola, to assure fathers of families that "an education which consists in making children study some profane poets, and then sending them to a banking-house to take lessons of exchange and usury, was as prejudicial to their souls as to their intelligence." But the sentence had gone forth, and monastic education was to be superseded by that which sends men for contemplation to the gambling-room, and for philosophy to a London tavern.

* Epist. ci.

The great authors of the middle ages were studied assiduously by their contemporaries in the monastic schools. "It was of prodigious service to me," says Peter of Blois, "that in my youth I was made to learn by heart the elegant letters of Hildebert, Bishop of Mans*." The works of Gerbert in innumerable manuscripts were propagated through all the monasteries of Europe, in the first half of the eleventh century†. Professors were formed on the model of such men. Writing to Mathias, King of Hungary, Marsilius Ficinus says, "that in Nicolas he will hear the blessed Thomas Aquinas ‡." Bulæus excuses himself from enumerating the writings of St. Bonaventura, saying, "because they are daily in the hands of the learned §." From a copy which was given to me by a holy priest of the society of Jesus, I find that his meditations on the life of Christ were printed so early as in 1490, which shows how well their value had been previously understood.

With respect to the classification of sciences, and the order in which they were taught in the schools of the monks, there are modern professors who acknowledge that the system they followed, which was that of Vincent of Beauvais, is better than that of Lord Bacon and the Encyclopædists of the eighteenth century. It was in fact a natural order, not partial and arbitrary, but highly reasonable and just. The dignity of the office of instruction was never more profoundly felt, or practically maintained, than in the middle ages and in these schools. How sublime are the words of Pope Gregory X, writing to the King of Sicily respecting the duty of attending to the interests of learning! "The first formation of the supernal hand before its fall," says the Pontiff, "had an intelligence little less than the angelic, and penetrated the secrets of celestial things with the serene force of light, and obtained knowledge of sciences from the depth of an illuminated breast; but after the fall, it could no longer behold, without the interposing cloud of worldly darkness, what it formerly contemplated. But the immense benignity of the Creator, unwilling that such an ingenious creature, formed in his own likeness, should become utterly vile, to repair gloriously, as if by accident, what was injured by the deadly food, decreed that rude man whom natural reason could scarcely lead to the perfection of discretion, should be instructed by sciences and arts, and that the nations dispersed into the variety of many idioms, should be again united as it were, by means of one universal source of communication in the one literary order of Latinity: thus the deeds of our fathers are recorded in books; thus the contests of truth and falsehood are related: thus are taught the process of generations and corruptions of all bodies, the qualities of elements: thus the harmony of voices enables men to conceive how the Lord may be served by musical modulation: thus the scholastic doctrine estimates terminations, distinguishes the length and breadth, and height and depth, the movements and construction of the heavenly bodies, and the whole physical order, though apparently transcending the force of reason. Greatly then does it concern all orthodox kings that they should possess in their kingdoms industrious men, illustrious for science and virtue, conducing to the glory of their reign, under the Prince of Peace*." In point of fact, too, the instructors of youth held a lofty position in society.

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* Epist. ci.

† Hock, 153.

‡ Epist. ix.

§ Hist. Universit. Paris. tom. iii

While presiding over the school at Reims, Gerbert was in relation with all the most eminent personages of the day. He was greatly esteemed by Adelheid, the second wife of Otho I. and by Theophania, the wife of Otho II. and daughter of the Greek Imperial house, and also by Adelheid, the wife of Hugues Capet, who entrusted him with the education of her son Robert. Ruthard, head of the school of the monastery of Hirschau, refused the episcopacy of Halberstat, which was offered to him by the Emperor, saying "let it be given to one worthy of it. I hesitate not to prefer the monastic quiet, and the study of the Scriptures, to all the honours and riches of the world†."

"According to the sentence of my heart," says Peter of Blois, "if there be a Paradise in the present life, it is either in the cloister or in the schools; for whatever is without these two, is full of anxiety, disquietude, bitterness, fear, solicitude and sorrow *." "Scholastic labour," he says elsewhere, "although inefficacious to salvation, partakes nevertheless of a certain worldly decorum and secular innocence †." The greatest intelligences of the middle ages fled to it, sooner or later, for peace. "For these cares and troubles," says Gerbert, writing to Raimund, the monk of Aurillac, "the only remedy is philosophy, and the studies in which we have so often, as in this turbulent moment, sought a refuge from the storms of fortune raging against others or ourselves. The state of the republic in Italy seeming to admit of no other means of escape from the yoke of tyrants, but by engaging ourselves in commotions and horrors, we have chosen the certain leisure of studies, rather than the uncertain business of wars. Farewell brother Airard, farewell the most holy order; and you my director and instructor, be mindful of me in your holy prayers ‡." How affecting are these revelations of the hearts of such men! In later times, the great John Gerson fled to the same peace. Towards the close of his life he retired to Lyons, opened a school for boys, and wrote Tractatus de parvulis trahendis ad Christum. In dying, he ordered that the words of the holy mass "Sursum Corda" should be the only inscription on his tomb.

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* Ap. Martene, Vet. Script. ii. p. 1274.

† Gerbert, Historia Nigræ Silvæ, i. 123.

Mildness and benignity constituted the mode of treating students in the monastic schools. This is expressed in the imagery of the Campo Santo at Pisa, where grammar is represented by a woman who gives suck to a child. When Suger was first received as a little boy at St. Denis, the monks sent him to the priory of St. Martin in order that his tender age might not be exposed to the severity of the rules observed in the abbey. Gentleness is the favourite quality ascribed to the professors, as in the necrology of St. Gall, where the death of one of them in 915 is thus noted, "Non. Maii obitus Failani doctissimi et benignissimi magistri." All the letters from the students of St. Gall, of which fragments remain, indicate the same treatment. "From the time that I

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* Pet. Bles. Epist. xiii.

† Epist. 139.

‡ Epist. Gerberti, 45.

was placed under the yoke of your authority," says one disciple to his master there, "you have educated me without any remuneration from my friends, with no less love than if I had been your own son: but as it is written in the Gospel, 'the labourer is worthy of his hire,' I propose to go to my sisters in the island which is called Lindova, and there I think that I shall receive some little present, with which I can return to your presence." These poor boys were educated thus tenderly, however humble might be their birth. Another of them writes to his parents, and says, "You have followed the best of counsels in sending me to the monastery of St. Gall for edification in discipline and learning. There I confess I have found these two things abundantly: but this is my demand, that you would out of your compassion send me a little present of two shirts and a linen tunic, that I may appear honourably with my fellow-students, and not with the shame of nakedness *." Wherever a contrary system was introduced, we read of its being condemned. Thus Euffridus, a holy man of the diocese of Cologne, one day hearing a great crying from the school, entered, and seeing a scholar about to be flogged, rushed up like a lion, raising his staff against the scholastic and his assistant, and delivered the boy from their hands, saying, "What are you doing, tyrant? You are placed here to teach, not to kill scholars." The other remained mute and confounded †.

Guibert de Nogert, after describing what he terms the cruel love of his pedagogue, to whose private tuition he had been committed in his boyhood, observes "that it was irrational not to allow him time to play, because the puerile, and indeed the nature of grown men," he says, "is beyond measure distended by the assiduity of meditation, it is weakened, and rendered lethargic. In proportion as the acumen of the mind kindles to perseverance in study, does it on the other hand cool from its strength being too much exhausted, and from excess of rigour it becomes dull. Therefore it is necessary for the intelligence, while encompassed with the weight of the body, to be more temperately exercised: for even in

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* Ap. Goldast. Aleman. Antiquit. 11. 1.

† Cæsar Heisterbach Illust. Mir. lib. xi. 5.

Heaven there is one hour's silence, from the impossibility of exercising the gift of contemplation without intermission. Much more are mortal minds incapable of excessive labour. God has not made nature uniform, but has delighted us with variety, and the mutations of day and night, spring and summer, autumn and winter. Let every one therefore who has the name of master, take heed, and let him moderate the discipline of boys and youths, because we ought not to treat them as if there were in them the plenary gravity of old men. My master punished me for not knowing what he did not know himself, but it was too bad to expect from a fragile little breast what he had never given to it. And nothing is more difficult, than to give instruction to others when one's own ideas are not clear. All this I say, my God, not that I would injure such a friend, but in order that every one who reads may understand that we should never teach for certain any thing that we may fancy, nor involve others in the clouds of our own conjectures*."

Within monasteries such was not the discipline; for we find men looking back to them with love, as to the play-place of their early days. Colemann says, that he had heard Hemming, the sub-prior of Peterborough, describe the juvenile sports of St. Wulstan, and how he used to play on the meadows with other boys, and that, at a time when he was a mirror of saintly youth†. The Pré aux Clercs was an important spot to the students of the abbey of St. Germain-des Près at Paris: so was the river or the pool to those of other monasteries; for some of them, like Beowulf himself, would not have feared to struggle with a fancied foe beneath the waters. The abbot Oderisius erected a bath in the abbey of Monte Casino in the tenth century‡. Baths also were in the monastery of St. Benedict at Capua. The rule permitted even the monks themselves to bathe; which custom St. Dunstan and Lancfranc sanctioned§. In the annals of Corby, at the date of 1264, we read that the junior brethren used to perform a sacred comedy of

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* Guiberti Abb. de Novigento de vita sua, lib. i. cap. 5.

† Dissection of the Saxon Chronicle.

‡ Chronic. Casinensis, lib. iv. 3.

§ Hist. Casinensis, Præf.

Joseph, sold and promoted, but that this was ill-interpreted by the other superiors of the order; and in a manuscript of Clauster-neuburg, there is mention of a pious drama, in which our Lord's resurrection was represented. In the monastery of St. Blaise, in the Black Forest, there was a book containing the play of the three Magi, in which the neighbouring nobles, such as the Counts of Lupfen and Furstenberg used to perform. From the faculties which Pope Honorius III. yields to William, Bishop of Modena, of absolving scholars who should strike one another lightly and without rancour *, it is clear that juvenile sports had all reasonable scope. The amusements of play-days in the abbey of St. Gall, in the tenth century, were throwing, running, wrestling, and having a mock fight with stones.

"Hac galea lapident pueri, plaudantque tenelli,
His stadiis ad metas tendant, his præmia prendant,
Hos Thalos juvenis dextret, manus uncta palæstret,
Dorsa tegat nudus, solet ictus clam dare ludus.
Ephebis nulla hodie sint quæso flagella,
Circator sileat oculosque videndo reflectat,
O, mihi donetur, hodie sibi talpa putetur,
Tu Pater elysiis videare quiescere campis."

Above all, swimming, wine, and lights, that is, play till after dark.

"Suppeditant festo tria Gaudia, (Pax Pater esto)
Fax, lavacrum, vinum †."

Such were their three joys. The wine is an allusion to the foundation made by Erchenbert, a vassal of the abbey, from his goods at Elk, for giving each of the students a glass of wine on Easter day. King Conrad I. and Bishop Salomon III. gave them certain days of play, and the occasion of the latter being given is thus related. After spending some days at St. Gall, the Abbot Salomon, Bishop of Constance, on the morning of his departure, wishing to bid adieu to the scholars as he passed by the school, opened the door and went in. "Now it was the law then as now," says Ekkehard, "that all

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* Italia Sacra, i. 122.

† Vacation Song of Notker Labeo in lib. Bened. 257.

strangers entering should be made prisoners till they ransomed themselves. So the scholars cried out that they made prisoner not the Lord Abbot indeed, but the Bishop: he willingly suffered them; so they placed him in the master's chair. 'Well,' said he, 'but if I sit in the master's seat, I will use his authority.' 'Be it so,' said they; 'still as our master, we will ask you to ransom yourself.' Then he, as he always delighted in the studies of St. Gall, rising up, embraced and kissed them all one after another. 'Yea,' said he, 'if I live I will ransom myself.' Then going out, and calling the seniors before the door of the schools, he ordained that thenceforth the boys should have three successive days of play every year, and should have meat for dinner on each of them; and then he departed." He flourished under the Emperor Lewis, and saw five kings, who were all his friends. Under him there were fifty-two priests in the abbey, twenty-four deacons, fifteen subdeacons, and twenty boys *. The walks of the students were another recreation. In the eighth century, the abbey of Reichenau having a cell and school in Ober Bollingen, and Meinrad one of the monks being sent to preside over it by the abbot, we read that the walks which this professor used to take with his scholars on the other shore of the lake and in the deep forest of Ezelwald, inspired him with such a love for solitude, that at length he left his office of teacher, and became a hermit in that wood †. Such were in general the tranquil recreations of the pacific household. The remorse inspired by accidents arising from rougher sports, indicates with what eyes they were regarded. Meinher the second abbot of Monte Sereno, in 1137, had a brother, Wicmann, who was present at a certain juvenile play when one boy was killed. As a penance, he immediately resolved to leave the world and follow his brother; but he would never consent to rise higher than subdeacon ‡.

We have before heard that it was in the monastic schools that king's sons had generally received their education, procul à strepitu offendiculisque aulicis, as

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* Ekkehard de Casibus S. Galli, c. i.

† Berno Augiens. in Vit. S. Meinrad. 11.

‡ Chronic. Montis Sereni ap. Menckenii Script. Rer. Ger. 11.

the old writers say. Here in effect we find them along with those of the humblest subjects; and indeed it was a noble and kingly culture, which imparted the sense of duties, which dried not up the heart, neither rendered the body incompetent for exercise, nor the mind for the meditation of moral truths. From the time of Charlemagne the sons of the French kings were always brought up in monasteries, and generally at St. Denis, where they received a Christian education, and were trained to a manly and pious discipline. Dagobert, son of the King of Austrasia, was educated in a monastery of Ireland, and after a seclusion of many years, there being recalled to his own country, he became sovereign of all Austrasia as the second Dagobert. Louis VII. says of himself in a certain charter, "we passed the time of our boyhood in the cloister of the church, as if in a certain maternal bosom *."

In the thirteenth century the emperor Philip, from having received his education in an abbey, was said to have retained ever afterwards a great fondness for the sacred offices. "He loved to assist at them, and in the house of the Lord, before whom is no respect of persons, he used to appear with so little regard to his dignity, that he used to suffer the poorest priest or scholar to repeat the responses at his side, as if he were only his fellow-scholar." This emperor excelled all men of his age in chivalrous deeds and renown †. The chronicle of St. Richarius says, "that in this monastery dukes, counts, sons of dukes, and sons of counts, and sons of kings, were educated: whatever was most sublime in dignity in the kingdom of the Francs rejoiced in having a relation in the monastery of St. Richarius. Many of our abbots were counts, shining in nobility of birth and strict observers of the sacred rule ‡." So it was every where. The young Count Elzear de Sabran was educated with the monks of the abbey of Marseilles; Cosmo de Medicis, the father of his country, in the Camaldolese convent of the angels at Florence. The books of the middle ages contain many incidental testimonies to the character of the students in the monastic schools. Of

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* Ap. Script. Fr. xii. 90.

† Hurter Gesch. Inn. iii. 11. 94.

‡ Lib. iii. c. x.

St. Bernward, thirteenth bishop of Hildesheim, the old writer of his life, Tangmar, says, " When a youth in the schools, his genius and virtue were admirable. When I used to take him with me on some service without the monastery, I used to be struck more than ever with his extraordinary qualities, which at other times, when he was in the midst of the other youths, I could not so easily estimate. Often for the whole day we studied on horseback, at one time reading a no less prolix lesson than if we were at leisure in the schools, at another poetizing and making verses by the way; then descending to prosaic ground, we used to argue on questions of philosophy. He excelled no less in the mechanical arts than in all liberal science. He wrote beautifully, he painted well, he sculptured, and constructed buildings *." Peter of Blois, writing to the abbot of Gloucester, says, " You ask me whether I knew this new bishop of Paris, and what I think of his life and manners. It is of curiosity to inquire thus; but I know that the love to your Lord Henry of blessed memory, the late Bishop of Worcester, obliges you to inquire of us. I knew him when he was a boy, and I devoutly loved him as a little scholar. Peter de Verno, his master, used often to tell me with what solicitude and devotion he used secretly to exercise his boyish years in works of piety. As a youth he walked in sanctification and honour. In later life he dispersed all his property in England and gave to the poor, impoverishing himself to enrich three industrious scholars. He is now transplanted, that his light may shine to all men. He is nearly related by blood to the kings of England and France, but the humility of his mind exceeds the nobility of his origin †." Cæsar of Heisterbach relates a vision, disclosing the sanctity of a scholar. " In Bonn," he says, " was a certain recluse, who one night perceived such a light through the chinks of her cell, that she thought it was day. Opening her window, which looked over the cemetery, she saw over the grave of a scholar, who had been lately buried, a woman surrounded with a blaze of glory, which was the cause

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* Vita Berwardi, Ep. Hildesh. ap. Leibnitz Script. Brunsv. illust. tom. i.

† Pet. Bles. Epist. cxxvi.

of the light. She thought she heard a voice saying that it was the mother of Christ come to take away the martyr; for truly scholars, if they live innocently, and learn with zeal, are martyrs *."

In the third book we have seen the causes which led to the establishment of the universities, to which the superiors of monastic schools so unwillingly sent their students. It was impossible, however, to resist the new attraction. So that Stephen Laxington, an Englishman of angelic life, the nineteenth abbot of Clairvaux, erected, in 1240, the college of the Bernardines, at Paris, for the students of that abbey †. The abbots had houses for their respective students in different universities. Those of Trouast, of Mount St. Michael, of Dauné, Dardene, Barbery, Daval, De Savigny, De Mondaye, De St. Barbe, and De Belle Estoille, had hostels for their pupils in the university of Caen, and all these abbots used to assist at the opening of the schools, which was a very honourable thing to see, adds De Bourgueville ‡.

We before remarked the extraordinary privileges granted with a view to draw scholars to these academies. Many who had assisted to destroy the institutions of the middle age,—the houses of the templars and of the lepers, coming to have doubts as to their own mission, founded colleges for the poor;—little popular states, as it were, in the heart of Paris, which were multiplied in a few years. Nevertheless, these only seemed to give occasion to the monastic student for following the example of St. Benedict, who, when a youth, chose to forego all the advantage of attendance at the public schools, to be "scienter nesciens et sapienter indoctus," rather than sully the purity of his soul by remaining to witness the disordered life of the students.

When the monastery of Clairvaux, in early times, first instituted a house for students at Paris, the abbot sent to the devout Arnulph, Abbot of Villiers, to ask his assistance; but the latter was astonished at this novelty, says the chronicle, "for he knew that the order had been founded in the spirit of great simplicity, and that it had continued to his time to evince the utmost humility and sanctity, and it seemed strange that monks should

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* xii. 46.

† Notit. Ab. Ord. Cist. i.

‡ Les Recherches de Normandie.

now forego the cloistral exercise, and give themselves to the study of letters. He considered the words of the Apostle, 'Scientia inflat.' So he returned answer that he would give nothing; which the Abbot of Clairvaux took ill. Future generations," adds the chronicle, "will judge whether the man of God discerned the truth, and whether the same humility will continue in religious houses as in times before the ordination of such studies *."

Experience too soon justified these forebodings. The universities proved a snare which entangled and captured many. That of Naples, founded by Frederic II., out of spite to Bologna, produced fruits worthy of its author, even while men of great merit, such as Peter of Ireland, the master of St. Thomas, taught philosophy in it. O how young Thomas, while studying under him, regretted the sweet days that he had passed at Mount Casino †.

The universities contributed to create a classical mania in certain cities, and as an ingenious author says, "both in arts and letters to hasten the resurrection of Paganism ‡." The universities opposed every thing that broke the spiritless uniformity arising from the notions of centralization. In the quarrel of the empire with the Church, they almost always took the side of the temporal power, which had more seductive presents than the Popedom §. They were often hostile to heroic virtue. That of Paris decided against the maid of Orleans. They were not destined to inherit the beatitude of which we are yet to treat. As the agents of Henry VIII. discovered they could be bought over for a certain sum to betray justice, though they might afterwards turn round and for greater ease betray the purchasers. The university of Paris was dead before the revolution. After Rollin, it produced no man of eminence. The bishops did not confide their scholars to it, but kept them in their seminaries. They found after all that the monks had been right at first.

Philip, Abbot of Goodhope, in answer to a certain John, formerly a disciple of Anselm, who after becoming

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* Hist. Monast. Villariensis, i. c. 8, ap. Martene, Thes. Anecdot. iii.

† Touron, Vie de St. Thom.

‡ Rio de l'Art. Chrétien, 445.

§ Audin, Vie de Luther, i. 40.

a monk seemed to regret the time of his studies in Paris, says, "Blessed is the man, not who hath heard Master Anselm, or who hath studied at Paris, but whom thou, O Lord, doth teach thy law *." "We can neither condemn nor approve of your wish to study at Bologna," says Pope Clement IV., writing to a clerk named Raymond de Engoyssolis, "for the name of study," he continues, "taken properly, seems so fair that it soothes the ears of all who hear it, to whom it presents either a lover of study, or one studious only in name, although often one thing is acted and another pretended †." "There was a certain youth at Daventium," says Thomas of Kempis, "pursuing his studies as a scholar, and sometimes he used to be invited and tempted by offers of presents to remove to Paris: but by the advice of devout persons he declined exposing himself to such dangers. Meanwhile, it happened that two of his fellow students, who had gone from that school to study at Paris, after a short time died there, both on the same day. The said youth, hearing of this, was struck with the uncertain good attending scholastic things, and induced to become a disciple of Christ among monks ‡."

"Misericordias Domini in æternum cantabo," after citing which words a Saxon monk exclaims, "O Lord my God, my Creator and Redeemer, what mercies hast thou shown me from the beginning of my life to this day. Not an hour or moment has passed in which thou hast not multiplied upon me thy mercies, for thou didst preserve my infancy and youth, and give me such success in the schools, that in my eighteenth year I was placed over sixty or eighty scholars to examine them in Greek. Then when my parents, elate with such a reputation in Paris, wished me to remove to Erfurth for university studies, thou didst inspire me with better resolutions; for then I began to think and say, If now I were to be a doctor, and every day to hear the salutation, Domine Doctor, and if after this life I should descend to eternal flames, what would all my philosophy and learning avail? So the words *ewechlike* and *ommermer* made me determine to forsake the world and its delights. Therefore the mercies of God I will for ever sing, who inspired me with the good will to enter this holy order *."

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* Epist. vii. ap. Bulæus, Hist. Univers. Par. tom. ii.

† Ap. Baluze, Miscellan. tom. iii.

‡ Thom. à Kemp. Dialog. Novitiorum.

The monastic students did not pant after the waters of the university with the ardour which impelled the Saxon innovator to repair to Erfurth and Wittenberg. "When Arnulph II., the nineteenth abbot of Villiers, in the eighth century, was a youth, he did not wish to be sent to Paris to study," says the chronicle of that abbey, "rather desiring to be edified in charity than to be inflated with science, imitating the example of St. Benedict, who devoted himself wholly to religion, omitting the schools. Nevertheless, at that time the monastery had many students at Paris †." Writing to one of his clerks, Petrus Cellensis says, "Your place of exile is sufficiently replete with joys, however vain. Who besides yourself would not esteem Paris a place of delight, a garden of plants, a land of first fruits? Nevertheless, in laughing you have spoken the truth; for where there are greater pleasures for the body, there is the place of banishment for the soul. 'Ubi major et amplior voluptas corporum, ibi rerum exilium animarum; et ubi regnat luxuria, ibi miserabiliter ancillatur et affligitur anima.' O Paris, what a fit place art thou for taking captive and deceiving souls! In thee are placed the nets of vice, and the snares of evil, and the arrows of death, which pierce the hearts of the foolish. So thinks my John, and therefore he names it an exile. May you always esteem it as an exile, and hasten to your true country. There you will find face to face in the book of life not figures and elements, but divinity and truth itself, without the labour of reading or the weariness of seeing, without danger of mistake or error in understanding, without the care of retaining or the fear of forgetting. O happy school, where Christ will teach our hearts by the word of his power; where we shall learn, without study and reading, in what manner we may be able to live eternally happy! There the book is not purchased; the Master of the writings is not paid. There is no circumvention of disputations, no intrication of sophisms, but a clear determination of all questions, and a full apprehension of

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* Joan. Buschii Liber Reformationis Monaster. Saxoniæ, c. i. ap. Leibnitz, Script. Brunsv. i.

† Hist. Mon. Villar. c. xi.

all reasons and arguments. There life avails more than reading, simplicity more than ability. There no one is refuted, excepting those who are excluded: but with one word of final judgment, Ite and Venite, all objections and questions are decided for ever. I wish that the sons of men would apply themselves to these better studies, rather than to vain and pernicious discourses. Certainly they would find a more abundant return of fruit, and a greater and more availing honour *."

But it is time that we pass still more into the interior of the abbey, and inquire respecting the rules and customs of the house of peace.

CHAPTER X.

After describing in minute detail the miseries that marked a courtier's life when Henry the Second was the English king, Peter of Blois concludes, summing all up, by saying that "in the court there is no order †." Perhaps we could not find a more expressive term for marking the contrast between the peaceful life in cloisters and that of other men, than by using the converse of this sentence, and saying that in the monastery there was order. Hugo of St. Victor, indeed, supposes order in the court; but his distinctions make the contrast no less striking. "Far different," he says, "is the order of the cloister from that of the court: there you sit in council with the rich in secret to slay the innocent: here you sing, 'Non sedi cum consilio vanitatis, et cum impiis non sedebo.' There your right hand is full of gifts; here you wash your hands with the innocent. There the poor are robbed; here to the poor free offerings are made. There the sinner is praised in the desires of his soul; here the just man is blessed ‡." Perhaps again we could not better pourtray the cheerful diversity incident to the cloistral order than by confronting it with the striking picture of its exact opposite, which Tiek

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* Epist. lib. iv. 10. † Pet. Bles. xiv.

‡ Hugo de St. Vict. De Claustro Animæ, lib. ii. 16.

produces as the vision of a reprobate. "In the numerous vast halls, swarms of men," he says, "were sitting, standing, or walking about, all in the same state of deplorable woe. And no variety, no division of time, no hour, no day or night changed this melancholy monotonousness. One solitary amusement was there. Now and then some one reminded the others of their former faith; how during a short time they had feared and worshipped God. Then a loud burst of laughter, as at a most portentous absurdity, pealed through the hall. Afterward they all grew grave, and some strove with all their faculties to call back the reverence and sanctity of their former feelings, but in vain." In the monastery the rule was variety in uniformity, and the consequences were peaceful joy, and hope that never withered. "Recollect," says St. Basil to a fallen virgin, "recollect the tranquil days, and the illuminated nights, and the spiritual chaunts, and the sonorous psalmody, and the holy prayers *." "Whatever is done by the monks," says a great English philosopher, "is incited by an adequate motive. Their time is regularly distributed; one duty succeeds another, so that they are not left open to the distraction of unguided choice, nor lost in the shades of listless inactivity. There is a certain task to be performed at an appropriated hour; and their toils are cheerful, because they consider them as acts of piety, by which they are always advancing towards endless felicity †." The hours in monastic life deserved the appellation given to them by the Pythagorean poet, where he speaks of the three sisters, "Good-legislation, Justice, and Peace," which were also called hours, from time being essential to the exercise of their respective functions ‡. Such were the fruits of the monastic rule, order, variety, and peace.

The most celebrated of the primitive rules of the oriental monks were those of St. Anthony, St. Macaire, St. Hilarion, and St. Pachomius. In the last half of the fourth century the rule of St. Basil gave greater regularity to the monastic institution. St. Augustin found monks in Italy, and in fact the monastic order was soon spread over the west. In a work of the fifth century we read, "These men generally live in remote places,

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* Epist. 45. † Johnson. Rasselas. ‡ Olymp. xiii.

even when they reside in cities. Their conversation is without ostentation: they have one place of assembling; they are humbly clad; they care not how vile may be their food and drink; they have appointed hours for singing psalms and hymns to God; they fast till evening; they sleep upon rushes, and, during the night, there are stated vigils and times of prayer. They never mistake the approach of day, but the first dawn raises them and matutinal devotion is exercised in offering praise to God[*]." There were, however, then various orders in the west. The Italian monks generally followed the rule of St. Basil, but in Gaul each great monastery gave name to a certain class as following the customs of that chief house, which in the sixth century all lapsed into the holy institute of St. Benedict. Towards the end of the fifth century at Nurcia, a few leagues east from Spoleto, at the foot of the Apenines, St. Benedict the great was born, the patriarch of the western monks. At Subiaco, and in twelve other monasteries built by him, he left a certain form of order, but gave no laws or precepts to bind these in union round a common centre, according to the idea which had originated with Pachomius, but which had become nearly obsolete, each monastery following the rules of its own abbot[†]. There were nearly as many rules as there were cells and monasteries; yet all were united in peace and charity. There was supposed to be but one order of monks in the Church. Three centuries after the great Benedict, in the year 751, the second of that name was born. St. Benedict of Aniane was by race a Goth; he was bred a page in the court of Pepin-le-Bref, became a warrior, and served in many of the expeditions of Charlemagne. In 774 he renounced the world and became a monk in the abbey of St. Seine, from which he passed afterwards to that of Aniane, where he became abbot. He it was who conceived the plan of reducing the rites of all the different monasteries to one common standard. This great work was begun at the solemn assembly of the abbots of the western empire at Aix-la-Chapelle. The wars and troubles of the ninth century revived, however, the confusion, which was not finally removed till the rise of the celebrated congregation of Cluny under Odo. The rule of St. Benedict used to be called *κατ' ἐξοχὴν*, the rule, the holy rule, both by councils and chapters. Mabillon proves against Maresham, that the first monks of England followed this rule *, which St. Boniface introduced into Germany, Kero, a monk of St. Gall, translating it into the barbarous idiom of that people †. The one name of monks, therefore, began to be distinguished into various branches at the end of the ninth century, when the congregation of Cluny, on account of customs superinduced to the rule of St. Benedict, began to be called the order of Cluny, the chief features being the subjection of other monasteries to the Abbot of Cluny. In the eleventh century succeeded the congregation of Camaldoli, founded by St. Romuald; that of Vallombrosa by St. John Gualbert, that of Cisteaux by St. Robert, and many others which were all subject to the rule of St. Benedict; so that until the thirteenth century, and the rise of the Mendicant orders, there was but one order of monks; for though there were the titles of Cluny, Camaldoli, and others, yet these were all confederated in the union of one rule. The habits indeed were different: the ancient Benedictines wearing black, whence they were called the black monks; the Cistercians at first grey, and afterwards white. Hence St. Bernard, in his Apology to the Abbot William, says, "Unum ordinem professione teneo, ceteros caritate;" but there was still but one genius of the ancient monastic order, and one object with them all.

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[*] Consultat. Zachæi et Apollonii, lib. iii. c. iii. iv. ap. Dacher. Spicileg. x.

[†] Mabill. Præfat. in V. Sæcul. Ben. § iv.

What now was in general the fundamental character of all monastic rules? It was an adaptation to the end of procuring a pacific life in common for men, whose years were to be spent in contemplating or in announcing their benignant Lord Jesus Christ, either as being born or nursed, or as teaching, or fasting, or preaching, or labouring, or dying, or rising again, or ascending to heaven, or coming again to judgment. When a Benedictine monk first subscribed his engagement, he laid the instrument on the altar, repeating, "Suscipe me, Domine, secundum eloquium tuum, et vivam; et non confundas me ab expectatione mea!" These words having been thrice repeated by the assembled brethren, the newly professed prostrated himself at the feet of each monk in succession, beseeching him to pray for him, and as he was raised by each he received the kiss of peace. "The rule of St. Benedict," says Michelet, contrasting it with that of St. Columban, which soon perished through its excess of mysticism, "is a rule of good sense, a rule of labour, grave and practical." As the above terms of subscription indicate, it is a rule conformable to the Word of God. Similarly again, in the rule of St. Francis there is nothing but what is prescribed in the holy Scriptures, as the blessed Cæsarius de Spira shows. The seraphic Father only says, "The rule and life of the friars minor consists in observing the holy Gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, living in obedience, without property, and in chastity." Bernardine, general of the Capuchins, says, in his apology to Cardinal Sanseverino, "The perfection of the seraphic and evangelic rule consists not in syllables or sentences, but in spirit and in truth *". The order of the bare-footed Carmelites offered, as St. Theresa said, "these three steps to Christian perfection, poverty in common, retreat from the world, and manual labour." "In correction, and admonition, and discipline," say the Præmonstratensian statutes, "all is to be done according to the rule, 'Cum dilectione hominum et odio vitiorum †.'" John Andræa, a most eminent lawyer, when in Rome, examined the statutes of the Carthusians, and then said, that he had never read or heard of any drawn up with greater discretion, sobriety, humility, or charity than these; and soon afterwards with his patrimony he built the Carthusian monastery of Bologna ‡. "On entering a religious order," says Father Judde, "a man finds that the rule has only developed what he had long been accustomed to read in his own heart." Thus before the constitutions of St. Ignatius, St. Francis Xavier governed in India nearly in the same manner as the holy Founder did in Europe. The first Fathers, on receiving the constitutions, found that they had themselves had the same thoughts §. A modern French

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* Præfat. in I. Sæc. Bened. 8.

† Ap. Goldast. Rer. Alem. ii. 1.

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* Annales Capucinorum, ad an. 1536.

† Statuta Ord. Præmon. c. vi.

‡ Pet. Sutorus, De Vita Carthusiana, ii. iii. 3.

§ Œuvres Spirit. iv. 65.

author*, alluding to the reform instituted by St. Benedict of Aniane, produces some of the minute articles which were designed for the domestic regulation of monasteries, respecting habits and diet, and then complains that these are miserable prescriptions, quite foreign to a religious sentiment or moral institution. But he should have observed, that these precepts began by enforcing attention to the original rules which had extorted his praise, and though to a professor before a promiscuous assembly these minute articles might seem trifling, to any experienced superior, who had to govern a number of men living in one house, they would probably appear a necessary part of the material element of a religious community. The prescribing a particular diet for each season, the prohibition of indiscriminate bleeding, and the providing peculiar indulgences for the sick or delicate, or even the regulating the hours of opening and shutting the gates by the alternation of certain months, furnish weak grounds for the conclusion that the monastic institution had lost its grandeur, and had become full of puerilities and servitude. The superiors of religious houses knew perfectly well the distinction which this historian seems to propose as the result of his own philosophy. "Habetis dilectissimi: you have here, my beloved, according to your request, certain customs which we observe, in which are many mean and minute things, which perhaps ought not to be written, unless because your love was resolved to judge nothing, but to embrace whatever was prepared." So speaks Father Guigo, prior of the Carthusians, at the end of his "Customs," about forty-four years after the foundation of the order by St. Bruno†. Indeed, the fourth chapter of the first book of this collection, treating on the spirit and end of this order, supplies an admirable answer to such objections. Richard of St. Victor, while showing that the discipline of the body is useless without the discipline of the mind, observes, that "where exterior discipline is wanting, the interior certainly cannot be maintained ‡." "Every power," says St. Thomas, "which can be ordained to action requires habit by which it may be well disposed to act, and therefore habit is necessary to the will, which is an intellectual power*." The object of the monastic regulations was to produce habit.

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* Guizot. † Annales Ord. Carthusiensis, lib. i. c. 80.

‡ Ric. St. Vict. Allegoriæ Tabernaculi Fœd.

The wisest politicians have admitted that the best way of learning how to govern a state well was to study the constitution of religious orders. Their soul, indeed, was obedience, without which, as the historian of the Carthusians says, "not even the desert could yield peace," and therefore St. Bruno renounced that sweet solitude at the voice of the sovereign pontiff†. But for men humble and gentle, as even the profane historian remarks, "the service of the Church was a true liberty‡." The services and practices of religion exalt and ennoble, and correspond with those lofty sentiments of the dignity of our origin, which are found in the writings of the great men who collected the traditions of antiquity, while those of the world seem often invented, in order to degrade and humiliate men, while, by flattering the passions, they reconcile them to the vileness and absurdity of the offices required. "Why should monastic obedience seem grievous?" asks a master of novices. "What a hard obedience do unhappy men render in the world, without any consolation or fruit from it§!" The motto of the congregation of the Oratoire might have been that of all the religious houses, "Ici l'on obéit sans dépendre, et l'on gouverne sans commander." The monastic rules excluded despotism. "For no superior or subject," says Peter of Blois, "is it lawful to follow his own will; for the legislator of monks prescribed, as if by a general edict, that all should follow the rule as their master; and from this law neither the abbot nor the prior is excepted||." In point of fact, too, the government of monks was full of indulgence and condescension. Seldom could they address their superior in words like those of Eurylochus in the name of his companions to Ulysses, complaining of his iron nature in ordering them to wander all the night long:—

> *Σχέτλιος εἶς, —— πέρι τοι μένος οὐδέ τι γυῖα*
> *κάμνεις· ἦ ῥά νυ σοίγε σιδήρεα πάντα τέτυκται*¶.

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* Q. L. Art. v.

† Pet. Sutorus, De Vita Carthus. i. v. 1.

‡ Orderic Vit. Hist. Nor. lib. iii.

§ Joan à Jesu Instruct. Magist. Novitiorum.

|| Pet. Bles. Epist. 131.

¶ xii. 279.

William of Jumiège says of Robert, Abbot of St. Evroul, who established a monastery on the shores of Calabria, that "he disdained his own body, but supplied all who were subject to him with food and clothing in abundance, while endeavouring to maintain their hearts under a regular discipline *"

"It is not for me," says Peter the Venerable, Abbot of Cluny, "to deter novices, and by my probation of a year cause them to be rejected for ever. It is not for me to refuse to supply meat and drink, and clothing, and other necessaries, according to the diversity of infirmities, climate, and times, lest, while I do not render to man what is man's, he cannot render to God what is God's. Nor shall charity give place here to the dictates of a proud superstition †." "Nothing is contrary to the rules," he says again, "which is done from charity; if we change or modify some minor regulations, we do it for the good of others; and we broadly reply to those who accuse us of innovation, that charity justifies and calls for such dispensations ‡." The cloister, notwithstanding the strictness of its discipline, did not furnish an exception to the result which a modern author ascribes to the organization of society in the middle ages, saying, in allusion to it, "Jamais l'individu n'a tant vécu." We find that the monastic superiors followed the method of Pythagoras, who used to adopt a different mode of discipline with different persons. When Abaris the Scythian came from the Hyperboreians, advanced in age, a priest of Apollo, and versed in sacred things, though rude and uncultivated in Greek discipline, he did not lead him about first through various contemplations, but dispensed with the long silence and the long hearing, and at once admitted him to familiarity with his doctrines §. The priors of the middle ages acted thus. When Count Guigo was admitted into the monastery of Cluny, the holy Abbot Hugo, knowing that he had been brought up delicately from a boy, and was accustomed to have only soft furs or silk next his skin, granted him a dispensation from wearing the usual coarse woollen vest; for he foresaw that he who was first in the secular warfare would no less desire to contend with the best in the spiritual,

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* Lib. vii. 30.

† S. Pet. Ven. Epist. lib. i. 28.

‡ Id.

§ Jamblich de Pyth. Vit. 19.

and so the event proved [*]." St. Adalhard, in the ninth century, though the names of the brethren were inscribed in his heart, yet had always a certain number of them written on a tablet, which he held in his hand, that he might sedulously examine and study the manners of each, as thinking that he would have to answer for them in judgment. Therefore, knowing what was peculiarly expedient for each, he provided what was conducive to their salvation [†]. Orderic Vitalis says of Theodoric the first Abbot of Ouche, in the eleventh century, "he admitted men of different ages and degrees to conversion under the rule of the holy Father Benedict. He led humbly to follow a better life in the school of Christ, Goufroi, Rainaud, Foulques, and some other learned grammarians. He treated with goodness the old man Riculphe, and the country priest Roger, the gardener Durand, and some other simple disciples. He trained also to the art of reading well, singing and writing, and other useful works, proper for the servants of God, Herbert and Berenger, Goscelin and Rodulphe, Gislebert, Bernard, Richard, and Guillaume, and many other young men of good dispositions: in fine, many of the peasants seeing such zeal and sanctity, found also their salvation there [‡]." St. Bernard advising Turstin, Archbishop of York, to hold what he holds, and exhibit a monk in the episcopal dignity, adds, "that if some latent cause should compel him, or the Lord Pope indulge his desire of quiet, he advises him not to be deterred by reported asperity of food or clothing or poverty, provided he may pass where he can hope to find greater purity; and moreover that in houses of this kind souls are in such a manner consulted for, that according to age and weakness a fitting care of bodies is never denied [§]." St. Bernard furnishes a remarkable instance of the forbearance of monastic superiors in his own conduct towards Nicolaus, the notary, a cheat and impostor, who left the Cistercians under him, carrying off books and money; having frequently forged letters in his name, from having possession of his seal. St. Bernard says that he had long known the man, but had waited for his conversion or open declaration of treachery[*]. It was characteristic, however, of all monastic rules to imply a state of life from which no doubt men of the luxurious habits belonging to the modern civilisation recoil with a kind of horror, as from an austerity which neither reason nor religion sanction; though a little consideration would lead any unprejudiced mind to a conclusion widely different from theirs, so clear is the truth observed by St. Augustin, that it "is easier for those who love God to retrench their cupidities than it is for those who love the world to satisfy them[†]." "We are apt enough," says a late historian, "to ridicule the austere observances of some orders; yet we may be assured that without such austerities monastic piety could not long subsist. Those who live on the luxuries of nature will receive the yoke of the passions[‡]."

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[*] Bibliothec. Cluniacens. 459.

[†] Vita S. Adalhardi Mab. Acta S. Ord. Ben. iv. 1.

[‡] Lib. iii.

[§] Epist. 319.

Having already alluded to the belief and practice of men in ages of faith in this respect, I shall now pass on hastily; only observing, by the way, that even the ancient philosophers practised acts of self-denial to teach them patience and endurance, as Socrates was known to have done[§]. Homer, as Cardan remarks, makes his Ulysses not courageous, for he prefers Ajax to him; not strong or swift, for he makes Achilles superior to him; not rich, for he gives the first place to Priam; not powerful, for he subjects him to Agamemnon: but he ascribes to him the virtue of endurance[||]. Not alone with the mysterious depths of religion, but also with all that is great and heroic among men, was the austerity of the cloistral life in harmony: and hence it was a popular saying of the middle ages, as we learn from Hugo of St. Victor, "That a soldier and a monk wear the same cloth[¶]." The mild and delicious graces of faith would never have been seen in the world, if there had not been also witnessed, as Hugo of St. Victor says, "the sackcloth of Jerome; the tunic of Benedict; the mat of Eulalius; the tears of Arsenius; the nakedness of Paul; the pot of Elisha[**]."

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[*] Epist. 298.

[†] Epist. 220. ad Bonif.

[‡] Europe in Mid. Ages, vol. ii.

[§] Aul. Gell. ii. 1.

[||] Cardan de Sapientia, i.

[¶] De Claustro Animæ, lib. ii. 18.

[**] De Claustro Animæ, lib. ii. Prolog.

Men of counterfeit gaiety, who live in the crowd, though often heard to exclaim, " O how full of briars is this working-day world!" are filled with sadness on visiting a Carthusian or Cistercian house, from believing that the inhabitants of these serene abodes, inaccessible to bitter care, are in a state more wretched than the general infelicity of man: they even evince displeasure, declaring loudly that they do not pity them, since, by their choice of life, they have brought that misery on themselves. But we have only to wait a little to be convinced of their error: for the wind of adversity, sooner or later, is sure to blow upon that smiling surface, and then all is visibly reversed. Let the moment of reflection come; who are, then, the self-tormented? Will it be for them to compassionate the monks? Morality may spare her grave concern, and her kind suspicions. They will have to say of them what the Book of Wisdom affirms of the just: "Illi autem sunt in pace." And if the scene is so quickly altered in the present dark, uncertain life, where a blow, or a sickness, or any political convulsion, is sufficient to make the dissipated and the religious change parts, in regard even to the external condition,—what will be the contrast hereafter, when every one will be obliged to distinguish good from evil, without having any longer the power to make a choice! This,—this was the reflection that reconciled men in ages of faith to the austerity of cloisters. "O what folly," exclaims an ascetic, "to fear the monastic discipline, and not the flames of inextinguishable, eternal fire! Ah! there is too great a difference between the humble habits of monks and the ghastly aspect of demons; between the devout chant of the religious and the intolerable wailing of the damned *."

The habits of the monastic order were not the inventions of caprice, but the result of experience, which determined what dress was most simple, œconomical, and conducive to the purposes of the life to be pursued by monks. Paul IV., on his election to the papal chair, being mindful of the ancient friendship which, from tender years, existed between him and Jerome Suessanus, the hermit of Monte Corona, sent orders to him to come to Rome. The obedient man arrived, and was received

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* Dialog. Novitiorum.

by the pope with a joyful countenance. After embracing him, the pontiff, raising him up, said, "What covering is this, Jerome? What austerity is this? It is too vile: you must lay it aside." The old man answered, "Holy Father! when clad in this habit, I can walk more easily amidst the oaks and brushwood; nor would any other be suitable to a penitent." "You shall be no longer in the woods and desert," said the pope; "but you shall remain here with us, and from a hermit become a cardinal." Prostrate instantly on the earth the old man fell; and, with tears, implored the pontiff not to execute such a resolution; declaring that he knew of no happiness beyond the solitude of the desert. The pope found that it would be too grievous to press him farther: so the holy man returned in triumph to his cell in the woods. This is that blessed Hieronymus Suessanus, styled always "the hermit of Monte Corona who refused the cardinal's hat." He was an excellent physician, and skilled in the healing art, on which he had expressly written *. Nevertheless, though "the brushwood" accounted for much, it cannot be doubted but that there was a true connection between the solemn religious habit and the spirit of the monastic orders. "A vain heart," says St. Bernard, "induces a note of vanity in the body; and the external superfluity is an index of the interior." There was besides, perhaps, a certain tradition of antiquity, which was not without its influence, in the original choice of colour: for, though one cannot suppose that the example of Pythagoras, who used to wear a white habit †, was kept in view, yet many of the first Christians, who passed from the schools of the philosophers and retained their habit, may be presumed to have handed down some general notion as to the kind most suitable to the life which corresponded, in the Church, with that of their former condition. St. Clemens of Alexandria says, that Plato follows Moses, in praising white garments as most proper for peaceful men, who are children of light ‡. Isaiah, he says, went barefoot; Elias and St. John the Baptist were coarsely clad §. Popular local usage dictated, in later times, the choice of the seraphic Father; though poets found it suitable to an

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* Annal. Camald. lib. lxxii.

† Jamblich. de Vit. Pyth.

‡ Pæd. lib. iii. c. 11.

§ Id. lib. ii. c. 10.

angel as to him who did open the gate of purgatory: of whom they say,—

> "Ashes, or earth, ta'en dry out of the ground,
> Were of one colour with the robe he wore."

"The fewer things a man wants the nearer he is to God," replied Socrates, to one who ridiculed his custom of walking barefoot, and having but one dress for summer and winter. Sublime answer! which ought to content those methinks who now disdain the habit in which Dante wished to die. But, in these most giddy times, men, who could endure to bear the appellation, would shudder at the thought of wearing the canonized habit of a monk; which, of old, was of itself an indication, both of the obedience and the charity of its wearer: for it was assuredly an act of charity to let men see, by the very raiment with which they clothed themselves, that they were still in the midst of them, those who followed in the narrow track of saintly founders, bound together in a venerable society to preserve, not so much the property or the exemptions, which might have become even pernicious, as the spirit of the holy orders of St. Benedict and St. Francis, so inseparably connected with a literal observance of their rules. "I knew many young men," says Father Elzear l'Archer, a Franciscan, "who, from having only beheld certain preachers of our order in the pulpit, before they had pronounced a word, were already converted in their hearts, and had resolved to leave the world, merely by the force of these men's countenances. Hence it is so often said, that our habit of itself preaches; and that it has a thousand tongues, each the most eloquent*."

The fasts and abstinence, as regulated in the monasteries, were far from being contrary to what the philosophy of the ancients deemed wise and expedient. Amidst banquets like the Syracusan and Italic tables, that Plato condemned, men may now speak disdainfully of them, and obtain applause; but, with such manners, it will be still true to say, in the words of that philosopher, that no man under heaven can ever be wise †. Pythagoras prescribed abstinence from certain kinds of food, from being convinced that the juice of meat tended to render wickedness robust. "Who knows not," adds a great French physician "that men fasting are more disposed for meditation; and that, after a feast, the mind is weakened. The art of abstinence is the art of living well *." St. Clement of Alexandria remarks, "that much food produces indolence, and oblivion, and stupidity †;" and Alanus de Insulis does not confine the evil to the soul, for he says, "Do you know whence come infirmities of body and mind? certainly it is from excess of food, and the deluge of potations ‡." Hence the saying of the middle ages: "Plures crapula quam gladius." Besides, it was impossible that men of gentle and refined natures should not love and adore that Orphic life, innocent and primeval, free from the slaughter and the blood of animals. "The less one seeks," moreover, as Hugo of St. Victor says, in commenting on the rule of St. Augustin, "the more strictly one lives, the happier one is: for an abstemious life kills vices, extinguishes desires, nourishes virtues, strengthens the soul, and elevates the mind to celestial things." With what horror men in the middle ages regarded the shame and sin of gluttony, may be witnessed in the curious letter of Peter of Blois to Richard of Salisbury §. Truly, if we abide by the sentence of their philosophy, there ought to be no hesitation in deciding between the simple diet of the monks, and the luxurious grandeur of worldly tables, as described by Le Grand d'Aussy, from the pages of Froissart and other old authors; between those of "voracious Burgundy, loving feasts," and the boards of that austere community of Cîteaux, reviving the manners to which the Church alludes in the vesper hymn for the feast of all the saints of the Benedictine order:—

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* Sacré Mont d'Olivet.

† Platonis Epist. vii.

"Vobis olus cibaria
Fuere, vel legumina;
Potumque lympha præbuit,
Humusque dura lectulum."

Antiphanes, the Delian physician, said that one cause of the diseases of men was the diversity of food; and Cardan, in the same capacity, speaks of the excellence of

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* Alibert, Physiologie des Passions.

† Pædag. ii. 1.

‡ De Arte Prædicatoria, lib. iv.

§ Ep. 85.

fish, as being simple and light nourishment *. St. Bonaventura, accordingly, observes that monks in the cloister, in consequence of their temperate and austere life, generally live to a great age †. In monasteries of Carthusians, as an historian of that order observes, it is common to find Fathers of eighty and a hundred years of age,—witnesses that their discipline does not impair the strength of nature ‡. The Père de Geramb remarked monks in the convent of St. Catharine, who, at the age of eighty and ninety-six years, showed all the vigour of youth. The common opinion, that the Carthusians take a vow to abstain from meat absolutely, is without foundation: for there is nothing in their statutes to forbid them from eating it in cases of necessity §. Father Elzeare l'Archer, the Franciscan, after observing how abstinence is conducive to health, says, "if it were not for their life being sapped at the foundations, which are the feet, in consequence of the ice and rock and craggy paths which they have to pass over, I believe that our poor friars, from being so abstemious, would live to be so old that it would be necessary to knock them on the head at last ||." "Why do philosophers and hermits live longer than other men?" is a question put by Cardan; who replies, "Because they lead a simple, abstemious life, in harmony with nature ¶." In fact, the monastic rules imposed nothing novel in that respect. When the rule of St. Benedict was first introduced into Brittany, there had been already seen there the pattern of a simple, natural life, austere but healthful, in the monks, who had been long in that country **. Mabillon justly observes, that the experience of many ages, and the admirable frugality of the most holy men of Germany, must disprove the assertion of the moderns, who pretend that the monastic discipline cannot be borne under that sky, and with the bodily disposition of that people ††. And, besides, we must remember the maxim of all religious orders, which Fulbert of Chartres thus expresses: "Abstinence only from meat does not so much avail with the Lord, as the

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* Prudent. Civilis, 43.

† De Reformat. Hom. Inter. c. 30.

‡ Pet. Sutorus de Vita Carthusiana, lib. i. c. 8.

§ Id.

|| Le Sacré Mont d'Olivet, 581.

¶ Cardan de Consolatione, lib. ii.

** Lobineau, Hist. de Bret. liv. ii.

†† Præfat. in III. sæc. Ben. 2.

mortification of vices *." It is certain that the abstinence and fasts of the religious orders, like parts of sacred vestments, are now only vestiges of primitive times, which originally formed no distinction between monks and other men. Le Grand d'Aussy, citing the statutes of the reform of St. Claude in 1448, says that he cites the rules of the monks frequently, because, from their nourishment, one can learn what was the general food of the people †: so that, even down to that period, the discipline of monasteries presented no such prodigious contrast as we might now suppose to that of the majority of secular houses. So strictly was Lent observed by the people at large, that, even so late as in 1629, there were only six oxen and about sixty calves killed for the Hòtel-Dieu and the whole city of Paris: for the hospital had then the exclusive privilege of selling meat in Lent, on the deliverance of a physician's certificate, signed by the curé. In 1665, the number was increased to two hundred oxen and two thousand calves; and so it went on increasing, until, as at present, the consumption became nearly the same throughout the year ‡.

The discipline of religious houses as that of the church generally, both in the east and west, has varied in different ages with respect to the kinds of food which constituted abstinence. Socrates says " some abstain from all animals, others eat only fish, others eat fowl, with fish, believing them born from the waters, in consequence of the text in which Moses records, that the waters were commanded to produce them on the fifth day, an interpretation general from the fourth century, and which St. Basil and St. Ambrose seemed to authorize. In the most austere religious orders, fowl and game were permitted at certain seasons. St. Columban fed his monks with that food during a scarcity. Chilperic invited St. Gregory of Tours to take some soup, adding that he might eat it as it was made of fowl. However in 817, the council of Aix-la-Chapelle forbade the use of such food excepting during the days of Easter and Christmas; and in consequence of this regulation the royal donations of fowl yearly to many different monasteries were

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* Fulb. Car. Epist. 36.

† Hist. de la Vie privée des François, ii. 233.

‡ Id. ii. 112.

anuulled, or rendered only obligatory at those seasons. This rule of the council did not affect the tables of seculars, for until the eighteenth century, no one scrupled at them to eat various kinds of aquatic birds on days of abstinence *. At one time again, the Sundays of Lent were of abstinence, and at others not. In the tenth century meat was then eaten. Photius, Patriarch of Constantinople, affected rigourism, and accused the west of not observing Lent strictly; but Ratram, monk of Corby, Hincmar of Rheims, Eudes, Bishop of Paris, and others replied to him, and showed that such things vary †.

Local circumstances sometimes affected the discipline of houses. Thus the abbey of Mount Sereno being on the top of a lofty mountain, and far distant from places where fish could be obtained, Pope Innocent III. gave the community leave to eat flesh, especially as their rule of St. Augustin did not forbid it ‡. In the abbey of St. Gall on days when meat was permitted, the monks eat bears' flesh, and that of wild horses, wild bulls, ibexes, marmots, pheasants, swans, peacocks, and all other birds §. In the eighth century, St. Chrodegand, Bishop of Metz, speaks of acorns failing, as if they constituted an important article of food. Philippe-le-Hardi, Duke of Burgundy, who had a Dominican for his Confessor, used to regale that monk every year on the festival of St. Thomas of Aquin, with a lamprey; and if it was impossible to find one, he used to give him forty-five sous in silver. With respect to the order observed in the refectory, many minuter rules were laid down; but we have no space to devote to them. The place of each monk who held office, the position of the tables, the number and kind of vessels, the books to be read according to the alternations of months, were all determined. In the abbey of Croyland, it was ordained that every day after dinner, as soon as grace was said, there should be prayers for the soul of King Ethelbald, the founder, and that the bounty of king Wichtlaf, who left his drinking horn, should be commemorated.

The silence observed in religious houses was another

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* Le Grand d'Aussy, i. 326.

† Id. ii. 39.

‡ Epist. Inn. lib. v. 10.

§ Ildefons von Arx Geschichte d. S. G. i. 250.

feature of monastic discipline, at which men conversant with the lessons of ancient wisdom will be less disposed to wonder, than those whose minds are formed by the common opinions of later times. One of the first proofs which Pythagoras required from his disciples, was whether they were able ἐχεμυθεῖν, that is, to keep in silence what he taught them; for he laid more stress upon the being able to keep silence, than on the being able to talk [*]. Cato used to say, "I wish that all men were mute; there would be then less improbity [†]," forcibly expressing only what Plutarch lays down in his treatise on "speaking too much." It was Simonides who said, "that he had often to repent having spoken, but never having kept silence." "In speaking we have men for our masters," says the Chæronian sage, "but in keeping silence, the gods," which was an allusion to the mysteries. "Silence," he adds, "is not only without thirst, as Hippocrates says, but it is without pain and sorrow; it is Socratic and magnanimous [‡]." Alluding perhaps to which opinions, St. John Climachus styles "a silent man a son of philosophy." The antiquity of this discipline among Christians has been often shown. "Extra Psalmos silentium est," says St. Jerome in his epistle to Marcella, speaking of a Christian community. At Nitria in early times it was a rule that no one should speak till after sext. At none began prayer and psalmody, as if in Paradise. From Complin till the "Pretiosa in conspectu Domini" at prime, silence was obligatory in every religious house. The regular places of a monastery where silence was to be observed, were the dormitory, the refectory, the infirmary, the library, the chapter room, the cloister, and the conventual garden [§].

We may remark that the defence of this discipline among the worshippers of peace, furnishes occasion to the monastic philosophers for evincing the profound knowledge which they possessed of human nature. "Choose silence," says Peter of Blois, "if you wish to have peace of heart [||]." St. Bernard calls the tongue,

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[*] Jamblich de Pythag. Vita, c. 20.

[†] Aul. Gel. xviii. 7.

[‡] C. 20.

[§] Joan à Jesu Instructio Magistri Novitiorum, c. 25.

[||] Pet. Bles. de silentio servando.

"the instrument that serves to empty the heart." "As a furnace," he says, "of which the mouth is always open, cannot retain the heat within itself, so neither can the heart preserve in itself the grace of devotion, unless the mouth be closed with the grace of silence." The holy Carthusian Patriarch Bruno knew well how to appreciate the force which is vouchsafed to man, and the dangers which encompass him in the frigid atmosphere of the present life, when he wrote at the head of his laws "Silere." If any chose to be disputatious, and to enquire why such laws should be necessary, the Cistercians might have deemed it sufficient apology for their custom to reply with Shakespeare,

"Why, 'tis good to be sad, and say nothing."

In point of fact, however, there are many men to whom this part of discipline is full of charms. Hear how Cardan speaks of himself. "I feel that I am little fit for conversation: first, because I love solitude; for never am I more with those whom I love, than when I am alone. But I love God, the good Spirit. When I am alone, I contemplate the immense good, the eternal wisdom, the Author of light, the true joy, the foundation of truth, the Author of all things, who is happy in himself, and the desire of all the happy. What other mind can I love? What intelligence more sincere, more lofty, more secure than the divine? Libraries are crammed with books; minds are spoiled by erudition; men transcribe but write not: what then can I hope from the converse of men—garrulous, avaricious, lying, ambitious men? But you say, man is a social animal, and why renounce friends in the world? I know that these things can be objected to me; but I am not ignorant that many things may seem hard and absurd, which when investigated appear very different; and that on the contrary, there are other things apparently gentle and useful, which in reality are absurd and hard *."

The nocturnal vigils again presented a point of contrast between the cloister and the world, sufficiently remarkable, and though men at present may not be long sleepers like Epimenides, no part of monastic discipline

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* De vita propria, c. 53.

seems to them to present a more vulnerable side. Who is this that moves solitary along the dusky aisles,

Νύκτα δι' ἀμβροσίην, ὅτε θ' εὕδουσι βροτοὶ ἄλλοι ;

In ages of faith it was the monk, and truly his motive was sublime. Within monasteries there were at least four hours of spiritual exercise and solemn music, while the rest of the world was buried in sleep. When I was in Camaldoli, the monks used to begin matins in the church at half past twelve. At three they returned to take repose, and at five rose for the day. At the Carthusian monastery of La-part-Dieu, in a deep black forest of pines on the mountains of Freyburg, the monks rose at eleven, and remained in the church till two. They then returned to rest till five. The day closed with them at seven in the evening, when they retired to rest. So that the very observance of hours separated them from the world, and I confess on going back to it, I almost envied them even this distinction. In the abbey of Croyland three lights used to burn in the cloister, and four in the dormitory every night till day-break, in order to guard against fire and many other dangers, as Ingulphus says *. The chronicles of St. Trudo say, " that lights all night were necessary in the cloister of that abbey, to obviate that horror of darkness which the children and the monks would otherwise have had to encounter in going to matins and returning †." In the houses of the knight templars also lights used always to burn through the whole night ‡. The holy fathers, as we observed in the fifth book, were unanimous in recommending the practice of devotion in the night. The monastic observance is therefore no novelty. " Our sleep," says St. Basil in his epistle to St. Gregory Nazianzen, " ought to be short, and interrupted by the thoughts of salvation. The middle of the night ought to be for those who are entirely devoted to a spiritual life, what the beginning of the day is for persons who live in the world." St. Chrysostom speaks of it as a monastic custom to assist at the divine worship before day at the crowing of the cock. "A sleeping man," says Clemens Alexandrinus, "is like a dead man. Often times during the night, one ought to rise from one's bed and give thanks to God, *πολλάκις καὶ τῆς νυκτὸς ἀνεγερτέον τῆς κοίτης καὶ τὸν Θεὸν εὐλογητέον* *."

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* P. 105.

† Chron. Abbatiæ S. Trud. vi. ap. Dacher. Spicileg. vii.

‡ Regula lxx.

The more ancient monks determined their time of rising by the course of the stars, as Cassian relates †. The monks of Cluny observed this rule ‡. Gnomons were used in the day, or hour glasses, as Cassiodorus relates in his divine readings. Petrus Damianus alludes to another but difficult mode of knowing the hours, which was, from the quantity of Psalms sung §. Some ascribe the first clock to the invention of Pope Sylvester II.; but a clock was sent as a present to Charlemagne from the King of Persia, two hundred years before Sylvester. The ancient Romans had a boy to announce the hours. They superstitiously thought it better to number the hours before meridian, than those after it, a fancy which appears also in the work of Hesiod entitled "Days."

Such then in brief, were the most severe prescriptions of the monastic discipline. To the multitude they may appear painful, for without love, all things are bitter and tasteless, but whatever is bitter becomes sweet by love, as the holy fathers of the desert and the monks of later ages found, the former using herbs and bark of trees, dry bread and cold water for nourishment, the earth for their bed, a stone for their pillow, sackcloth for covering, and the latter the diet and necessaries belonging generally to the poor, in all which things they both found an ineffable sweetness on account of love, which renders all difficult things light, and as it were nothing ||. The legislator of Fontevrault shows that the members of his order will do nothing through fear, but that they will observe all their rule through the love of Christ, and through that good habit and delight in virtue which will belong to them ¶. Strict indeed was the obligation of monks to comply with their holy institute. The exact observance of the rule of St. Benedict, during the ninth

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* Pædagogus, lib. ii. c. 9.

† Lib. ii. c. 17.

‡ Bibliotheca Cluniacensis, 448.

§ Opus. 13. cap. 17.

|| Idiotæ Contempt.

¶ La Reigle de l'ordre de Fontevrauld, c. liv.

and tenth centuries, was an object even of the greatest interest to kings. Every monk was bound to learn it by heart, word by word *. A German historian says that no monarchs could have more at heart the discipline and maintenance of their troops than the Emperors Otho I. and Conrad II. had deeply fixed in their breast as their fond desire, the exact observance of the rule of St. Benedict, by the monks who professed it. Otho I. swore that he would break his crown and give the fragments to the abbey of St. Gaul, if it were necessary to promote the observance of the rule. He delayed to give the kiss to the new elected Abbot Notker, merely from observing him dressed with more elegance than he thought would have been sanctioned by St. Benedict. Monks were buried holding the rule in their hand, to signify how much depended on their having well observed it.

"We arrived at Fontevrault," says Dom Martene, "while they were celebrating the obsequies of a young monk who had died that day. In the morning he had been carried into the church of the nuns, where high mass had been sung for his soul, and all the sisters had given him the holy water. Thence he had been carried into that of the monks, where we saw him clad in his monastic habit, holding in his hand a taper, with the rule, which was as the sentence of eternal happiness, if he had well observed it, or of his damnation if he had ill observed it †." But the due observance was known to be spiritual rather than merely literal, for hear how St. Bernard himself speaks: "How do they hold the rule, you say, who are clad in skins, and fed with flesh, and dispensed from manual labour? Attend to the rule of God, from which the institute of St. Benedict does not dissent, 'Regnum Dei intra vos est.' Therefore, brethren, do not found a calumny upon corporal observances, and neglect the chief things of the rule, which are its spiritual institutions. Better is humility, clad in skins, than pride in destitution. Better is a little meat for use than much vegetables for satiety. Esau was reprehended not for flesh but for pottage; and Adam was condemned,

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* Capit. Aquisgran. 817.

† Voyage Lit. de Deux Bened. 1717.

not for flesh but for fruit; and Jonathan was judged, not for flesh but for honey; whereas Elias eat flesh with innocence, and Abraham placed flesh before approving angels. Wine in moderation, as St. Paul prescribes, is better than water and avidity. Nor should you glory in the labour of your hands, since Martha, who served, was reproved, and Mary, who sat still, was praised; for the true labour is that which is spiritual *."

When any one monastery became eminent for the regularity of its discipline, the abbots of other houses used to propose it as a model to their own community. Thus, in the seventeenth century, the superiors of many abbeys in Switzerland applied to St. Gall for monks to effect a reform in their respective houses, when some were sent in consequence to Mariaberg, in the Tyrol; to Rheinau, Engelberg, Disentis, Pfeffers, Fulda, Hirschfeld, Ettenheimmünster, and Kempten; only at the latter convent they were opposed by the lay nobility.

The venerable abbey of St. Venne, at Verdun, twice reformed all the monasteries of France. In the eleventh century its holy abbot, Richard, restored the discipline of more than forty principal abbeys, which communicated the reform to others; and, in later times, Dom Didier-le-la-Cour, prior of the same house, caused the spirit of St. Benedict to revive in nearly 300 monasteries, and the congregations of St. Venne and of St. Maur to be instituted.

One great object of the journeys of the monks in the middle ages was to visit different monasteries, with a view to examine their customs, in order to transfer those that were excellent to their own. Thus we read of St. Botulphe, after the middle of the seventh century, that in his monastery in Lincolnshire he established many holy customs and rules of life which he had learned in monasteries beyond sea. "He taught his disciples the precepts of salvation according to the rule of blessed Father Benedict, mingling old with new and new with ancient things; at one time teaching the institution of the ancients, at another what he had discerned by himself †." Ingulph, Abbot of Crowland, in the time of William the Conqueror, says, "Remembering that, to the

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* S. Bern. de Præcepto et Dispensatione, v. 6.

† Mab. Præf. in iv. sæc.

honour of God and the edification of his people, in the monasteries beyond sea of Fontanelle, Jumièges, Cluny, and others, the mandatum of the poor was always observed after high mass, and that the people of God were much edified by it, and that in our English monasteries it was omitted or unknown, by the advice of our whole convent, I ordained that it should be daily practised in our monastery, directing that the almoner should leave the choir after the consecration, and proceed to the gate of the monastery, and introduce three strangers into the great parlour; or, if there should be no strangers, three poor old men; and if there should be none such, three honest boys; and then, at the end of mass, their feet should be washed, and provisions given to each of them, which they might eat there or carry away with them as they chose*.

Brother Udalricus of Cluny, being sent by the abbot into Germany, and coming to a monastery in the Black Forest at Spires, the abbot of that house, William, requested him to state the particular customs that were observed at Cluny; "for," said he, "your church, by the mercy of God, hath obtained no small reputation of religion among us; therefore, you would confer a great favour on me, if you would inform me what are the customs and institutions of your predecessors there; for even if they are not observed by us, it will serve to humble us, if we learn how you live and converse †." "I hear," he continues, "that your readings on private nights in winter are very long. Will you relate in what manner the Old and New Testament are read, both in winter and summer?" Udalricus, after giving him this satisfaction, informs him of diverse customs observed at Cluny. "On Maundy Thursday," he says, "the poor are introduced into the cloister, and placed on seats in order; the lord abbot and assistants proceed to wash their feet, while 'Mandatum novum' is read. Then the wine is blessed, and two denarii are given to each of the poor. After collation in the refectory, the monks rise to charity, and no one then presumes to abstain wholly from the wine which is produced; but every one tastes a little.

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* Hist. Croyl. 103.

† Antiquiores Consuetudines Cluniacensis Mon. Procem. ap. Dacher. Spicileg. iv.

When a monk desires to confess, he stands before the priest, and drawing his right hand from under the sleeve, places it on his breast, which is the sign of confession. If any one incurs a venial sin, he does not for that day kiss the text of the Gospel, nor go to the peace, or to the offering [*]." From all other Benedictine monasteries one monk used to be sent to Monte Cassino, in order to observe the discipline there [†], and for a similar purpose the abbots of Firmitas, Pontigny, Clairvaux, and Morimond, were obliged to visit Cîteaux separately every year [‡].

Reading occupied a large portion of time in the monasteries of the middle ages. In the Benedictine houses all were to study, as well as to labour with their hands. In Lent every one received a manuscript from the Library, which he was to read through in order, and return it in capite quadragesimæ. From the morning until tierce the monks were then to be employed in study, and no one was to cause any distraction by conversation. On Sundays all were to study [§]. Pope Leo IV. decreed, in the Roman synod, that on every day the monks should be instructed by reading or pious discussion amongst themselves [||]. The novices were required to learn the New Testament by heart, and every day they were to devote half an hour to study it [¶]. After vespers the juniors and others might study history or philosophy [**]. In the rule of St. Isidore it is required that after vespers the monks should meditate or dispute on questions out of the divine lessons till complin.

The word collation originated in the practice in monasteries of taking some slight food and drink on fasting days, in the evening, before going to hear read the collations of Cassien, previous to singing complin. In reply to the abbot William of Spires, Udalricus of Cluny thus describes the order of study in that abbey: "The Pentateuch is read between Septuagesima and the beginning of Lent, both in the church and in the refectory, each day the reader beginning where he had last finished. During the nights of Lent we read the exposition of St.

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[*] Ib. c. xii. 18.

[†] Hist. Cassinens. sæc. v.

[‡] Angelo Manrique Cisterciensium Annal. tom. i.

[§] Reg. c. 55.

[||] Præfat. in 1 sæc. Ben.

[¶] Joan à Jesu Instructio Magistri Novitior. c. 19.

[**] Ib.

Augustin on the Psalms; during which reading a brother goes about with a lantern to see that no one perchance sleeps. During the Passion we read the prophet Jeremiah, but only in the church. During the Paschal octave the Acts of the Apostles, and thence to the Ascension, the Apocalypse, and the canonical Epistles, which reading continues till Pentecost; including the book of Kings, of Solomon, Job, Toby, Judith, Esther, Esdras, and Maccabees: all which are read only in the refectory, and never in the church, excepting in portions on certain Sundays. From the calends of November Ezechiel is read only in the church, and finished before the feast of St. Martin; and then we read Daniel and the Twelve Prophets, with homilies of the blessed Pope Gregory upon Ezechiel. During Advent we read the prophet Esaia, which is generally finished in six nights. Then follow the epistles of Pope Leo, De Incarnatione Domini, and other sermons of the holy fathers, especially of St. Augustin. We then read the Apostle; the Epistle to the Romans is read through in two nights. If the Apostle should be finished before Septuagesima, we read the exposition of St. John Chrysostom upon the Epistle to the Hebrews. This is the circle of the year *."

In the wise communities of the western monks, attached to the soil by labour, men beheld for the first time work by free hands. In the rule of St. Benedict, as a French historian observes, "one is struck at the admirable equilibrium of devotion and practice. Labour is the first word of St. Benedict's rule. In vain did some of the Irish seek a more mystic rule under that of St. Columban, admitting only prayer and contemplation according to the oriental idea. The rule of St. Benedict extinguished it in the west. This order gave to the ancient world, worn with slavery, the first example of labour performed by free men. For the first time, the citizen, humbled by the ruin of the city, turned his eyes to the lands which he had despised, and remembered the labour which was commanded at the beginning of the world in the sentence pronounced on Adam. This great innovation of free and voluntary labour, effected by the monks, is the basis of the modern society."

"On arriving at the monastery of St. Œquitius," says

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* Antiq. Consuet. Clun. c. 1. ap. Dacher. Spicileg. iv.

Julian, who had been sent by the Roman pontiff, "I found there some old men writing: I asked, where was the abbot? and they replied, 'In the valley beneath the monastery he is cutting grass.'" Speaking of Herluin, founder of Bec, and of his first monks, William of Jumiège says,—"You would have seen them, after the office of the church, going into the fields to spend the day in agricultural labours; the abbot carrying the seeds on his head, and holding tools in his hand; some clearing the ground, others carrying manure on their shoulders, and spreading it on the ground; no one eating his bread in idleness, all returning to the church at the hour of the divine office, and then sitting down to a meal of oaten bread and herbs with salt and water *." When the monks of Cluny used to go into the fields to work, they would begin by standing in order with their faces to the east, and then, after short prayers, they proceeded to labour with their hands †.

From the travels of Dom Martene we can learn how strictly the monks complied with this injunction of their rule down to the latter times. "In the abbey of Orval," he says, "we saw Angels, in mortal bodies. Zealous imitators of the first fathers, they observe unequal hours in the distribution of their exercises; they work in the fields, and take their dinner there during the harvest; they are always gay, and one sees the joy of their soul painted on their countenances ‡." On arriving at the abbey of Gembloux, we heard that the day before the monks had been at work five hours in the fields, gathering in the harvest §. "On weak and delicate brethren," says the rule of St. Benedict, "such work, or arts, should be enjoined, that they may neither be idle, nor oppressed with violent labour. If there should be artisans in the monastery, let them exercise their art with all humility, and let not avarice creep in by the sale of their works, but let them always be given cheaper than the same would be sold by seculars, that in all things God may be glorified ||." Many monks, who studied mechanics in the

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* Lib. vi. c. 9.

† Antiq. Consuet. Cluniacens. Mon. lib. 1. c. 30. ap. Dacher. Spicileg. iv.

‡ Voyage Lit. de Deux Ben. 148, 9.

§ Ib. 117.

|| Reg. cap. 58.

time of Pope St. Gregory VII. are spoken of as being most skilful workmen. They were architects, carvers in wood, workers in metal; and even the common arts for the use of the monastery, such as those of shoemakers and vestment-makers, were exercised by monks *.

Trithemius mentions that there were 150 monks in Hirschau; and, besides these, there were sixty bearded brethren, who were not clerks, but called convertites, who were employed in manual labour, and imitating the contemplation of the monks. "Amongst these were men skilled in all mechanical arts: carpenters, masons, smiths, sculptors, carvers; and also tailors and shoemakers: all these met in common in the church at nocturnal vigils, and had permission either to follow the monks' offices or to hear shorter, and all dined together in the refectory. The master of these convertites was one of the best monks, and most learned in the Scriptures and skilled in preaching: 'Magister Barbatorum' was his name. On Sundays and festivals after prime, and again after sext or nones, he preached on vulgar observance. There were also fifty oblats—men who retained their secular habit, doing all kinds of menial work, helping the builders and carrying water, and ready for any duty,—who also served in the hospital, and all with the alacrity of charity; and they also had a master, who was a monk. Thus there were in all 260 men, serving God in all the fervour of charity and peace of religion, in all cleanness of heart and poverty of spirit, so that it was truly admirable to think of it. At complin every night they all met in the church; and, when the office was finished, all retired in silence to their cells. O how beautiful and delightful to behold such peace on earth, such a fraternity among men †!"

From the seventh century, in the abbey of St. Denis, there was a certain number of poor, called Matricularii, from their names being inscribed on the boards of the abbey; and these were supported and employed in various ways ‡. "Although the monks," says Peter the Venerable, Abbot of Cluny, "have servants and rustic labourers, we employ them only for lawful uses, and never vex

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* Voigt Hildebrand und sein Zeitalter.

† Trithem. in Chronic. Hirsangiensis.

‡ Lebœuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, iii. 200.

them by exactions, or impose any thing insupportable. If we see them in want, we support them with our own. We have servants and maid-servants, not as servants and maid-servants, but as brothers and sisters; and we never permit any one to injure them *." In the Benedictine order, the abbots and abbesses, on certain days of the year, were to minister to their inferiors in the kitchen. The rule of St. Ferreolus, as also the ritual of Bec, prescribes that this shall be done three times in the year. All this picture of monastic works I saw realized, while I resided in the abbey of Camaldoli; and I remember being much struck at the piety of the servants and herdsmen, who used to be assembled every evening to say the rosary and the litany, immediately after the monks had sung vespers. In conclusion one may observe, that the division of labour was as well ordered in monasteries as in the most industrious city. Some were charged with attending to the interests of the cloister; others were to preside over the crops and harvest. One was to receive the tributes; another to regulate the domestic economy. One had care of the sick; another had to receive the pilgrims and strangers; another to wait upon the poor †.

CHAPTER XI.

"SCRUTABOR Hierusalem in lucernis:" at hearing which words of the Supreme Judge, St. Bernard exclaims, "Quid in Babylone tutum, si Hierusalem manet scrutinium ‡!" Now, where abuse or degeneracy existed, there was Babylon, in the judgment of the ages of faith; and the difficulty of concealing or disguising any evil which insinuated itself into the manners or institutions of the middle ages, is one of the most remarkable features which distinguish them from latter times. "Many, by the persuasion of others," says Peter de Blois, "believe that their perversity is hidden; but they are perilously deceived: for let every superior be assured, that, on some side or other, he will be always infamous, unless he

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* S. Pet. Ven. Abb. Clun. Epist. lib. i. 28.

† Michaud, des Monastères au Moyen-age.

‡ Serm. 55.

evince true sanctity in his works: 'Vox populi vox Dei*.'" It was equally impossible for relaxation in communities to be palliated or kept secret: it soon became noised abroad. Hence enquiry and reform were words as familiar in those times as conversion; and, according to the advice of the councillors of Albert V., duke of Austria, abbots rather desired the reform of existing than the erection of new monasteries †.

But there was another kind of examination anticipated, and very differently regarded; which Hugo of St. Victor thus describes: "Balaam, turning his face towards the desert, and raising up his eyes, beheld Israel dwelling in tents by tribes; and the Spirit of God coming upon him, he said, 'How beautiful are thy tabernacles, O Jacob! and thy tents, O Israel!' The vain people turns its face towards the desert, while in secret thought it examines attentively the conversation of those who live spiritually, it raises its eyes that it may see Israel ‡."

To the vain people, thus idly engaged, many objections are familiar, founded upon the imaginary or real abuses which existed occasionally in the monasteries of the middle ages. These are vain, as will be evident, after a calm investigation: nevertheless, it will be necessary to touch upon this ground, so as to endeavour to form a correct estimate of the validity of the charges which are adduced against the peaceful communities to which Christianity gave rise. Now, in order to discover the abuses which arrived in monasteries, to what books should we refer? To those of the monks themselves, and of the men who loved monasteries. If we read the Apology of St. Bernard, we shall find that the modern unbelievers have nothing to urge against the abuses of the monastic state, that was not exposed with far greater force by that great father of monks and of the Church.

"In exposing abuses," says St. Bernard, "I do not fear that I shall give trouble to those who love the order; but I feel assured that they will look gratefully on those who attack what they themselves detest §." "In all the religious orders," says John of Salisbury, "there are found some of the faithful and some of the reprobate. Nor is the truth of religion or of profession on that account obscured: for what profession is there, or what society has ever been read of, into which some blot did not penetrate?" After a long condemnation of the vices which could be discerned in monasteries, he concludes thus: "This does not refer to the men who observe their profession. There is no life more faithful, none more simple, none more happy, than theirs within the cloister, performing their duties humbly, in all obedience and reverence, in all sanctification and honour, conversing with God; and, as if terrestrial angels, ignorant of all the perturbations of the world. If there be any thing in what is said which may seem to afflict them, it should be referred to fraternal charity*." "See your vocation, brethren," says another guide: "to enter a monastery is the beginning of the utmost perfection; but to live not perfectly in a monastery, is the utmost damnation†." In the earliest records of monastic history some traces of evil men are found. The desert had its Sarabaïtes, those unworthy children. In the latter times, pretended Franciscans, and pretended Claves, caused scandal in Italy, and gave occasion to papal censures‡. In every abbey, perhaps, lay some dead member, to use the expression of the Carthusian Sutorus, who cites in confirmation of it the text, "Non est domus in qua non jaceat mortuus§." Speaking of these monasteries, the abbots of the middle ages repeat the words of St. Augustin, and say, "I do not dare to pretend that my house is better than the ark of Noa, where, among eight men, one reprobate was found,—or better than the house of Abraham, where it was said, 'Ejice ancillam et filium ejus,'—or better than the habitation of our Lord Christ, in which eleven good men tolerated the thief and traitor Judas,—or better than heaven itself, from which the angels fell." In a poem respecting the religious orders, written about the end of the twelfth century, the source of all danger to the cloistral discipline was thus pointed out:—

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* Epist. 15.

† Senat. Dialog. Historic. Martini Abbatis Scotorum Vien. ap. Pez. Script. Rer. Aust. ii.

‡ Serm. 78.

§ Apologia ad Guillel. c. 7.

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* De Nugis Curialium, c. 21.

† Nuremberg Doct. Ascet. l. iv. 36.

‡ Wadding, An. Minorum, tom. iii.

§ Exod. xviii.

"Qui sunt in claustro quasi Sathan in paradiso.
Plurima falsorum sunt vere pericula fratrum,
Et venit a falsis fratribus omne malum *."

But there were many springs from which the waters of bitterness might flow. Guibert, abbot of Nogent, ascribes the decline which had occurred before his time in the monastic discipline to the custom of receiving children, whose presence introduced carelessness and tepidity into the order †. The unhappy Gottschalk had thus been offered, by his father, Count Bernus, a Saxon, to the abbey of Fulda, where Raban Maur, against the youth's inclinations, persisted in thinking that the act of his parents bound him to the state separate to God. Gottschalk appealed to the Archbishop Otgar, of Mainz, who convened a synod, to which came twenty-eight bishops and six abbots ; and the result of which was, that Rabon was summoned to answer before the Emperor Lewis, to whom he addressed a writing in his own defence, entitled "De Oblatione Puerorum," of which there is a copy in the abbey of Melk, in Austria. Gottschalk, however, remained in the monastic state, though he removed to the abbey of Orbais, in the diocese of Soissons.

Against this custom, founded upon passages of the Old Testament, but often the result of ignorance or unworthy motives in worldly parents, both the monks and the sovereign pontiffs continually raised their voices. The monks were careful to show the importance of undertaking that holy life, not through the advice or influence of parents, but willingly of their own accord, and solely moved by the vocation of Christ ‡. That all service and sacrifice must be voluntary, is shown by one writer of the middle ages in these words : "Ego quidem homo sum, non asinus, ut spontaneus inviter ad onera, non compellar invitus §." To provide against the incautious reception of novices in monasteries, St. Benedict, at the synod of Aix-la-Chapelle, in 817, caused it to be decreed, that the entrance to monasteries should not be

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* Sententia Brunelli de Ordinibus Religiosis ap. Martene, Vet. Script. tom. vi.

† De Vita Propria, i. 11.

‡ Antiquior. Consuetud. Cluniacens. Mon. ap. Dacher. Spicileg. iv.

§ Pet. Bles. Ep. 123.

made easy to novices; that, in the cell of the guests, they should serve the strangers a few days, for the sake of probation; and that, if they had any property, it was to be given to their parents*. Udalricus accordingly relates, in his customs of Cluny, that the oblats—that is, the children who had been offered to the monastery by their parents—were given the habit, but that the benediction was deferred until they should attain the legitimate age; that is, says Mabillon, until they should be of an age to know their own will; for, without their own spontaneous choice, it was expressly forbidden by the later canons to make them monks †. At Hirschau, in the tenth century, no one under twenty was permitted to profess ‡. A child, named Lambert, had been constrained by his father to assume the monastic habit. On growing up, he wished to inherit the goods of his family, of which his parents sought to deprive him. Pope Nicholas I. declared his profession null §. The Church terribly condemned those who entered a monastery from any other motive but piety. "Such persons," says the Council of Cologne under Herman V., "are not sons of God, or monks, but clearly mercenaries;" and the Council of Trent pronounces an anathema upon all, of whatever quality or state, who should compel or entice any one to take the habit ||. Mabillon has proved, by the testimony of Cardinal Peter Damian, that the custom of offering children had been abolished, at Mount Casino, before the end of the twelfth century. So attached to it were some parents, that Pope Clement III. had found great difficulties in labouring to extirpate it; and there were not wanting writers to inveigh against such prohibitions. However, if it lingered any where, the decrees of Celestin III. and of Innocent III. put a total end to it. The young St. Thomas was sent to Mount Casino at the age of five, merely to be educated with other children, and that also under a secular tutor ¶. Louis of Paris, in his exposition of the rule of the Franciscans, shows how well guarded was that order from all abuse on this side. "No one," he says, "who is the sole support of his parents,

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* Cap. 34.

† Præf. in IV. Sæc. Ben. 7.

‡ Trithem. in Chronic. Hirsaug.

§ Biblioth. Hist. de la Congreg. de S. Maur, 236.

|| Sess. 25. c. 18.

¶ Touron, Vie de S. Thom. 13.

can be received into it. If the parents of a friar fall into extreme necessity, he is to succour them; if not within the order, he can leave it, and work for them, asking leave from his superiors; and if leave should be refused, he must still do so, because he is more obliged to the divine and natural law than to all vows: but it is certain that he can always assist them otherwise, as there are never wanting charitable persons to prevent the necessity of a friar leaving his order. The brethren cannot induce, directly or indirectly, a novice to leave his goods to the order, or to the parents of the brethren, however poor. No one having debts can be received into it; but if any should be so received, the order is obliged to pay the debts. The brethren must not receive any one for sake of friendship, relationship, or any human respect; and must not refuse any one through hatred, contempt, or any human respect, under pain of mortal sin *." In the abbey of St. Gall, youths of high nobility were not so much desired; as experience proved that they, more than others, were liable to degenerate, and introduce confusion and relaxation into cloisters †.

The monastic exemptions, though granted with an excellent intention, were sometimes a source of abuse, against which St. Bernard expressly wrote, inculcating the duty of obedience to the ordinary ‡. "Some monasteries," he says, "in different dioceses, pertain more immediately to the holy see, from the will of the founders: but what devotion grants, is one thing; and what ambition, impatient of subjection, contrives, is another §." Thus he writes to Pope Innocent, to defend Albero, archbishop of Treves, against the unholy abbot of St. Maximin and some contumacious monks, who, under pretence of their immunities, oppose the wish of that prelate to reform them ||. In 1215, the Lateran Council deprived abbeys of all ecclesiastical jurisdiction to which they were not in a condition to prove their claims. Another source of degeneracy of course was in the men themselves who embraced the monastic state. It was the remark of Epictetus, and of all the old sages, that, to men of base natures, the study of philosophy was rather injurious than

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* Expos. Lit. de la Règle des FF. Mineurs, c. 2.

† Eckehard in Cas.

‡ S. Bern. de Officio Episcop. 9.

§ De Consideratione, iii. 4.

|| Epist. 180.

beneficial. When he perceived a man without shame, importunate and audacious, corrupt and insolent, he knew him to be one who meddled with the study and discipline of philosophy *.

Who seeks to question whether such effects could be discovered in the cloister? Doubtless there might be found at times some counterfeit, in whose hood that dark bird nestled of which Dante speaks; though such impostors found not long beneath their hands of promise the throng beneath who waited for the blessing: they were sure to be unmasked at length, and driven out. But a more subtle mischief consisted in the gradual decline of piety in others, who, in their commencement, had shed lustre. "Why does the manna taste now insipid in your mouth," says the ascetic to monks in this condition, "if it is not that you have returned to seek the wretched consolations of the world? Remember your going out from Egypt. Let that day of the Lord be for ever in your memory. Unquestionably the hand of the Lord was with you, or else you would have remained in the world. Where is, then, that spirit, that primitive fervour, that firm intention, that immoveable resolution, that love strong as death †?"

The apostate of Erfurth says, that he remembers well after pronouncing his monastic vow that his father exclaimed, "Heaven grant that this may not be a trick of Satan!" "Words which sunk so deep into my heart," he adds, "that it seemed as if God had spoken by his mouth." The seeds of less manifest evil existed in the natural or acquired inconstancy of some men, who would not indeed openly renounce their profession, but assist to produce relaxations, like that of the seraphic family to which Dante alludes as being turned backward, when by Acquasparta there were made changes in its rule. "I learned from a certain prudent and religious man," says Hugo of St. Victor, "that there are some kinds of men who can scarcely ever be retained with order in religion. These are painters, physicians, and buffoons, who are accustomed to travel through different regions. Men of this description can hardly be stable. The art of painting is very delightful; for when a painter has painted a church, a chapter-room, a refectory, or any cabinets, if

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* Aul. Gel. xvii. 19.

† Thom. à Kempis, Epist. i.

leave be granted to him, on being invited with entreaties, he goes to another monastery for the sake of painting. He paints the works of Christ upon a wall, but I wish he would hold them in mind, that he might know how to paint them in his life and manners. The medicinal art requires many things; for he who exercises it must have abundance of aromatic plants and medicines. When any one near the church falls sick, he is asked to go to him, and the abbot can hardly refuse him permission. Yet he only makes experiments on things uncertain. The experiment is fallacious, and he is often deceived. Whereas a monk should never speak any thing but what is true. Buffoons and jesters also, and those who have once acquired the habit of rambling, can scarcely ever be content to remain in the cloister [*]." The Fathers of the Council of Cloveshoe in the eighth century decreed that bishops were to take care that the monasteries should correspond with their name; that is, should be habitations of men labouring for God in silence and peace, and not receptacles of arts which minister to pleasure, of poets, minstrels, and musicians, but the abodes of men praying, reading, and praising God; that the youths within them should be trained to the love of the sacred Scriptures, in order that men well learned may be forthcoming to the general utility of the Church. Monks and abbots of the middle ages had occasion from time to time to complain of the introduction of human vanity into the retreats from which such pains had been taken to exclude it. In 1281 a general chapter of the Cistercians pronounced against the luxury of equipages which the abbots of Cîteaux began then to affect. It forbad any abbot or monk to mount into a chariot or palanquin, imitating effeminate delicacy, on pain of being commanded to fast on bread and water. To what refinement cookery was carried in some monasteries in the age of St. Bernard appears from his apology to William [†]. "With such art," he says, "are all things prepared, that when you have devoured four or five dishes, you will imagine that you are only beginning. Who is able to describe in how many modes, to omit other things, eggs alone are turned and tortured, with what study they are converted and subverted, liquified, hardened, aud diminished; now fried, now baked, now stuffed, now mixed, now separated?—In some monasteries on great festivals wine is mixed with honey and the dust of pigments. Is this, too, for the sake of the stomach and one's infirmity? Alas! after such potations, when one rises to matins, it will not be a song but a lamentation, "Non cantum sed planctum potius extorquebis." Are we to laugh or to lament at such things? Was it thus Macarius lived? thus that Basil taught? thus that Antony ordained? thus that the Fathers in Egypt conversed? thus, finally, that Saints Odo, Maïolus, Odilo, Hugo held the rule*? Again, he remarks that there are some men who are no sooner monks than they find they have weak stomachs, and who, instead of being clad with the cheapest raiment according to the rule, seek the most expensive; so that scarcely in our provinces can be found any thing good enough for them. The most honourable persons in the world, an emperor himself, would not disdain the garments which they wear, if adapted for their use." Some monks, in defiance of the canons, which did not even permit them to keep sporting dogs†, were known to indulge in hunting, and Dom Martene relates an instance that fell under his own observation: "On arriving at the little abbey of Brindler, which is in a vast solitude," he says, "the abbot was absent, but the monk charged with receiving strangers received us charitably, and while waiting for dinner, led us into the kitchen to warm ourselves; for in this country there is not so much ceremony. We counted as many as ten hunting dogs, who warmed themselves round a fire large enough to roast an ox, it being the custom here to throw whole trees into the fire. We heard that we could not see the library; so without losing time, or thinking that we lost much by not seeing it, we mounted our horses and rode on to sleep at Statberg‡." Where such relaxations prevailed, negligence and tepidity were a natural consequence. Cæsar of Heisterbach relates an instance in an amusing manner. "Henry, a knight of Bonn," he says, "passed a Lent with us. After he had returned home he met one day the Abbot Gerard, and said, 'My lord, I pray you to sell to me a stone near to such and such a pillar in your church, and I will pay whatever you ask for it.' 'Why, what service can it be of to you?' demanded the other. 'I will place it by my bed,' replied the knight, 'for such is its property, that whoever puts his head near it falls asleep.' Ever afterwards when the abbot felt drowsy in the church, he had only to look at the stone and he was as awake as ever *." Abuses therefore there were; for, as Dante says, "To Angels, wisdom and love are in one measure dealt from Him in whom nought unequal dwells; but will and means in mortals with unlike wings are fledged †." But, what is very important to remark, they were exposed; they were lamented; and a reform sooner or later was the result. Thus a complete restoration of discipline witnessed St. Germain, L'Auxerrois in 970, St. Maur des Fossez and St. Denis near Paris in 994, St. Richarius in Centula and St. Walaric in Leuca in 980, St. Peter at Melun in 991, St. Andreas in Vienne in 994, Marmoutier, St. Roche in Chartres, and St. Benign in Dijon in 980, Fontanelle in 961, St. Arnulf in Mouson, St. Martin and St. Julian in Tours in 973, Mici in 984, where Letald wrote, Massay, St. Peter in Sens, Lerins, one of the earliest in France, in 978, St. Eligius in Noyon in 980, St. Quintin near Peronne in 977, where the deacon Dudo related the history of the Normans in the spirit of the old minstrels; and St. Jodocus in 977.

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[*] Hugo de S. Vict. Institut. Monast. lib. i. c. 45. [†] c. 9.

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* Id. c. 9.

† Concil. Paris, 1212. Montpellier, 1217.

‡ Voyage Lit. 248.

When Peter, Abbot of Cluny, had sent couriers with letters to all the houses of his order, convoking all the priors of England, Italy, and other kingdoms to assemble at Cluny on the third Sunday of Lent, to receive more austere rules than had been previously observed, Oderic Vitalis was struck at the fact that no dissentient voice was heard. "The persons convoked," he says, "obeyed, and on the day fixed 200 priors met at Cluny. There were in the abbey that day 1212 monks. They made a procession, chanting according to the ecclesiastical rite, and in the joy of their hearts praising God devoutly. I can speak of this with certainty, since I had the satisfaction of being there and of seeing this glorious army assembled in the name of Jesus Christ ‡." "In our religious communities," says Fleury, "those which have relaxed in their observances, though the object of that

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* Lib. iv. c. 37. † Par. 15. ‡ Lib. xiii.

relaxation was to attract more members, decrease from day to day, whilst the most regular and austere houses are filled with eagerness*." St. Bernard, alluding to the wish of the old Abbot Guarinus to reform his community and attain perfection, expresses himself in these terms in writing to him: "Whence could such an ardour for renewing the order spring up, but from a renovation of mind? Thus a good tree yields good fruit. Your fruits are most pure, but what tree could produce them unless cleanness of heart†?" With such fruits the cloisters of the middle ages abounded. "Theodoric, Abbot of St. Tron," says Rudulfus, "loved our order and all who loved it, in so much that no brother enjoyed his friendship who he did not know was a faithful and diligent observer of its duties; and on the other hand, if a brother had ever so loudly reprehended any thing in his life, or words, or works, yet if it was known to him that he was faithful and diligent, he had familiar and constant access to him; for he attended to nothing but the faithful discharge of the duties imposed by the Church; neither age, nor familiarity, nor fear, nor consanguinity, nor science, nor beauty, nor nobility, nor prospect of utility, nor any other consideration, had the smallest weight with him in opposition to this‡." "What I am going to relate," says Cæsar of Heisterbach, "was told me by a certain abbot of our order, and by the monk Everhard, of the monastery in which it occurred. In Ostburg's Abbey, in the diocese of Utrecht, was a zealous monk. On the death of his abbot and the election of another, whom he knew to be a worldly man, he lamented, saying, 'Alas! the discipline of this monastery will soon perish!' and he said, 'Lord Jesus Christ, let me not live longer to witness the desolation of this house.' As he could not be induced to give his vote for the new abbot, he said to him with a tranquil mind, 'God knows that I love you, but I know that the religion of this house will be destroyed by you.' Early on the next morning, after saying mass, he desired to be anointed, though in perfect health. On their remonstrance he persisted, saying, 'This very day I shall die.' Then having placed the mat, he lay down and caused the community to be assembled by striking the tablet. After the prayers, as death did not seem to come, he rose up, and placing on his neck the stole with which he generally said mass, he invoked St. Mary, and placed himself before the altar, in the manner used with those who are in their agony. The just man's prayer was heard; for he expired, and all that he had predicted came to pass *." Turstin, archbishop of York, writes as follows to William, archbishop of Canterbury: "It is known to many with what goodness and renown of virtue the illustrious monastery of St. Mary of York flourished in the ears of all men. Hence the riches of the house greatly increased; but as virtue seldom keeps pace with wealth, about half a year ago some of the brethren, moved, I believe, by a divine instinct, began to be vehemently agitated in mind respecting the state of their conversation, and by a stinging conscience, as they testified to suffer internally, fearing lest they might be running in vain; for they thought it would be a crime, or rather insanity, if they should bear the rule of St. Benedict not to salvation, but to judgment of death. They disclosed their views to the Prior Richard, who, after some deliberation, engaged to assist them. Their number soon amounted to thirteen. So on the vigil of SS. Peter and Paul, the Prior Richard, on whom almost the whole care of the monastery devolved, took with him his sub-prior Gervaise and some of the rest, and disclosed their wishes familiarly to the Lord Abbot, a man, indeed, honourable and good, but too simple and illiterate. He shuddered at the novelty of the thing, and denied that he could change the customs of the place. To him the Lord Prior replied as a learned man, and showed that they wished to introduce no novelties, but on the contrary, to restore the ancient mode of life instituted by their blessed Father Benedict, and above all, the most ancient Gospel of Christ, which preceded all rules. 'We seek not to disparage any other monks,' said they, 'we envy no others; we know that in every place we serve our Lord; we militate under one king; but we know that the different exercises appointed by St. Benedict to obviate sloth, the enemy of the soul,—such as

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* Discourse sur l'Hist. Des vi. Prém. Siècles, 20.

† Epist. 254.

‡ Chronic. Abb. S. Trud. ap. Dacher. Spicileg. vii.

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* Illust. Mir. lib. xi. c. 25.

reading, prayer, labour, industry, silence, and stability, ought to be observed according to his rule. Therefore, O venerable Father, let us recur to evangelical purity, to evangelical perfection, and to peace. If we compare our lives with that standard, we shall see how we are fallen and condemned. Behold how alive is the Gospel in the Saviniac monks, and those of Clairvaux, who lately came to us; in whom so shines the evangelic light, that if it be lawful to say so, it would be more useful to imitate them than to recite the Gospel. When their holy conversation is seen, the Gospel seems to revive and flourish again in them. They alone seek not their own alone; they alone possess nothing; they alone injure not their neighbour; they are content with a moderate culture of the earth, and the use of cattle, and they do not seek to have these unless so long as God wishes, because when God wishes them to be taken away, they do not claim them by litigation. They, I believe, can truly say, 'The world is crucified to us, and we to the world.' They may be permitted to say, 'Dimitte nobis debita nostra,' who have no debtor from whom they wish to exact any thing. Happy race of men, whose habits, food, and entire mode of conversation savours of the Gospel. Their sole portion is God. As far as is possible for humanity, they fulfil the law of loving God and their neighbours: for adhering to God alone, they hold all temporal things in such contempt, that they desire nothing which can be an occasion of anger to their neighbour. Therefore, O Father, it cannot seem to be impossible to observe the rule of blessed Benedict, since God has given us such examples.' Thus spake the prior, but the Lord Abbot Galfrid did not receive his words well; but as he acknowledged that he was less clear-sighted and learned, he desired them to explain more fully by writing what they thought could be enforced; and when this was done, he desired time for deliberation, and promised an answer after the nativity of St. Mary. Meanwhile the fears and resentment of the other monks became so notorious, that the Prior Richard, the sub-prior, and secretary of the monastery thought fit to disclose the whole to the archbishop, and demand his clemency and that of St. Peter. Therefore Turstin the archbishop, hearing that these servants of God preferred nothing to the love of Christ, feared lest he should offend in them against the grace of Christ if he did not attend to their petition and provide for their necessity, and so by advice of religious persons he summoned before him the Lord Abbot Galfrid and Richard the prior, with his sub-prior, that he might procure the fulfilment of their wishes in peace. They accordingly protested again with tears that all they sought was to observe the rule in its ancient purity, and the Lord Abbot weeping confessed that their work had been long required, and promised that he would be no impediment. The tepid monks, however, threw many obstacles in his way, nor was it until the exercise of the archbishop's authority that the reform was fully accomplished *."

The influence of the world upon the manners of the cloister could not but be felt here and there during certain intervals. At one time secular men began to entice monks to come forward to assist them in their temporal affairs. Pope Eugene III. then warned the Cistercians in a letter to their general chapter against permitting themselves to be thus persuaded. "Since the children of this world," he says, "endeavour to draw you over, though unwilling, to manage their affairs, and wish to recall you from the peace of contemplation and the silence of the desert, to occupations and secular business, fix the eyes of your mind again on the institutions of your Fathers, and having the prophetic example, choose rather to be abject in the house of God, than to dwell in the tents of sinners." At another time laymen invaded the monasteries, and in order to plunder them, pretended to have a right to govern them. The pomp of some worldly abbots had opened the door to this abuse; for nothing could seem to be secular after this deplorable example. "I have seen," says St. Bernard, "an abbot proceeding with more than sixty horsemen in his train. If you were to see them pass, you would say that they were not Fathers of monasteries, but lords of castles; not directors of souls, but princes of provinces. Scarcely will they depart from home to a distance of four leagues without taking all their furniture with them, as if going with an army or about to pass a desert, where it would be impossible to find necessaries. Could not one vessel suffice for washing the hands and for drinking wine?

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* St. Bernard, Epist. 439.

Would not a candle give light without being in branches, and those of gold or silver? Could not one sleep unless under coverings of foreign manufacture? Could not one servant suffice to look after the horses, and wait at table, and prepare the beds*." In the eighth century began in France the abuse of certain monasteries being taken possession of forcibly by great lords, who seized part of their revenues for themselves. The Abbot of Murhart came to Stuttgard to the Avoué of the convent Udalric de Wurtemberg. "I thought," said he, "that the monastery of Murhart had been founded for monks; but I now see that it was for dogs. My monks can no longer perform the divine office amidst the ceaseless barking. So long as they are in my convent, I shall remain here. The lord Avoué can nourish me much more easily than I can his dogs." The Avoué had abused the right of Bernage, that of lodging the lord's dogs. The king's huntsmen arrogated at different times certain tyrannical privileges, which they exercised over the monks. They claimed the right to remain three days in monasteries with their dogs, horses, and all their equipage, and to be maintainod during the time. This abuse was abolished by King Charles V. Having himself lodged with his hunters in 1365 in the abbey of Livry, he gave the monks as an indemnity the right to feed thirty swine in the forest†.

The abbey of St. Hubert in the Ardennes might have its distinct race of black dogs, called the dogs of St. Hubert, without any abuse resulting, but it would be difficult to give an adequate compensation for the evil that must have accrued to discipline from such royal intrusions. The kings of France again claimed the privilege of placing one or two maimed soldiers in certain abbeys which enjoyed the right of free election, as oblats or lay brothers; but as Stephen Pasquier remarked, this opened the way to great abuse on the part of the king‡. The greatest of all abuses, however, consisted in the appointment of secular abbots, whose government was destructive of the whole monastic discipline; for these abbots would not allow the monks time to perform their offices; and from their cruelties the only way of escape was by addressing petitions to the emperors [*].

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* Apolog. ad Guillel.

† Le Grand d'Aussy Hist. de la Vie Privée, &c. i. 387.

‡ Recherches de la France, iii. 40.

About the middle of the fourteenth century, the English having plundered the abbey of Lagny, on their departure the house was left under the guard of Peter de la Crique, a most cruel man, who spared nothing that the English had left. Yet his cruelty could not resist the patience of the monks. He was touched with compassion; and to repair the evil he had done, he laid the foundation of a new and magnificent church, and finished the sanctuary [†]. In later times there were instances of these secular nobles being appointed by the state to govern monasteries even while minors; as when Claude de Saint-Simon was made abbot of Jumièges in his twentieth year, during the regency of the duke of Orleans, who gave him that dignity, which he exercised to the ruin of the monastery and the oppression of the poor. Many similar instances might be produced; but it is great injustice to represent such men, who were the enemies of monks, as their representatives.

In the middle ages the deposition of evil superiors was always a matter of course, unless when monastic liberty was fettered by the secular power. In the year 810 the monks of Fulda being prevented from applying to learning by the oppression of their severe abbot, Ratgarius, inveighed against him by various emblems and facetious devices, of which one represented an abbot mounted on a unicorn riding over some sheep who fled before him. He was finally accused, convicted, and deposed [‡]. "It is to be observed," says Michaud, "that the monks who wrote chronicles of their order or monastery were careful to mention and record whenever an irreligious or, as they called him, an unhappy abbot ruled; and whenever the monks forgot the spirit of their institute, by living to themselves rather than to Christ. They never fail even to mention at what epochs discipline was in the least relaxed, as when the monks were too much attached to the refectory, when they repeated their office too rapidly in the Church, and when there was no attempt to correct them." Now the same writers, we must remember, generally describe the monasteries as being a spiritual garden, and a paradise of perfection. They always designate a time of relaxed discipline as an exceptional period of calamity; as in the chronicle of Sens, where we read, "de Adelardo misero abbate Senoniensi et de miseria ejusdem loci *." The misery was a decay of piety and a life of pleasure. And what was the conclusion? "The time of mercy from God arrived," says the monk, "for there was in the monastery a youth named Rambert who desired to follow a holy life; so he fled from the house, and repaired to a neighbouring monastery where the monks were holy men serving God, who received him with kindness. After a time, being fully instructed in the rules of discipline, and invested with authority, he returned to the degenerate congregation, and laid before them the mode of life observed in the house from which he came: but finding his exhortations in vain, he used his authority, and gave them their choice either to adopt a holy life or to leave the monastery. All submitted but four, who followed the way of death, and left the cloister. The rest resolved to live to God; and in a short time Rambert became the object of their love and reverence." Several instances of the same kind occur in the Annals of Corby in Saxony. Thus we read, "In the year 1104 the school of the monastery declined sadly; and this year, 1109, the author of the evil is punished by God †." Again, at the date of 1470 we find this notice, "The state of our monastery was deplorable, so that brother Henry composed and sung a public lamentation in the form of a litany. In 1471 he went with license of superiors to be master of the novices at Herosveld. In the mean time may God have mercy upon Corby, where piety and learning exalted our order, where luxury and sloth now depress it. This is enough for the wise:" with which words the Annals conclude ‡. At St. Gall the same intrusion by secular nobles took place; but during those horrible times some of the monks remained immoveable. The Abbot, Franz, who died in 1529, amidst all this desolation, was a man of the purest manners, loving grandeur in the divine worship, studying

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[*] Mabil. Præf. in IV. Sæc. Bened.

[†] Lebeuf, xv. 47.

[‡] Schannat. Hist. Fuldensis, P. iii. 3.

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* Cap. 18. ap. Dacher. Spicileg. iii.

† Ap. Leibnitz. Script. Bruns. ii.

‡ Ap. Leibnitz. Script. Brunsvic. Illustrant. iii.

the ancient history of his country, and causing to be written out some beautiful books. Of Fridolin Sicher, who, at the same time, wrote several works respecting the divine office, the annuary of the house says, "Qui in cunctis angustiis hujus temporis permansit immobilis." In fact it was a remark made in all ages of monastic history, that during the worst intervals, when there was the greatest decay of discipline, there were always in monasteries some true servants of God, whose piety was the condemnation of the others. This Abeillard found to be the case at St. Denis before the reform had been effected by Suger; and hence, while reproving evil men, we always find those who sought to reform the manners of such houses concluding in words like those of Peter of Blois, who terminates one sermon thus, "We do not say these things, dearest brethren, on account of you; for amongst you there are many who excel in sanctity; but yet there are amongst you, as the Apostle says, many who are weak, and many who sleep, for as yet the tares grow with the wheat [*]." The conclusion arrived at by the fathers of the Synod of Teudo, under Drogo, bishop of Metz, after speaking of the condition of the monasteries in their address to Lothaire, Lewis and Charles, is conveyed in these remarkable words: "If the monks at this present moment should be less perfect in regard to divine religion and to the utility of the republic, they should be either corrected, or better men substituted in their place; but let not the order of religion, and the most sacred places, on account of the wickedness of the depraved, be committed to those to whom it is not lawful to commit them; since the Scripture clearly shows that Ozam was struck dead for wishing to raise up the fallen ark of the Lord, which it was not lawful for him so much as to touch [†]."

It cannot be denied but that the great power and privileges with which kings chose to invest the superiors of some religious houses, opened the way to much abuse on the part of the secular administration. It would be long and needless to tell of these. The Abbots of Fulda had sovereign power over ten square miles round the abbey [‡]. The landed possessions of the monks, by the feudal law, subjected them to the duty of military service, to which even convents of nuns were bound, as in the instance of that of our lady at Soissons *. Kings too very often chose to have their prisoners placed in confinement within monasteries, and hence prisons were often attached to them. It is true the plan may have originated in the predominant piety of the age, which sought to identify criminals with penitents, who only through that gate could pass to peace; but still the surprise with which one observed some abbeys fortified like castles, could not exceed that which the stranger experiences when he hears that there is a prison within them; and still more when he finds it such as Dom Martene describes when he says, "At the abbey of St. Nicholas-aux-bois, three leagues from Laon, in a fearful solitude, we saw the royal prisons, which are horrible to behold †."

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[*] Serm. lvi.

[†] Ap. Heumann. de Re Diplom. ii. 325.

[‡] Schannat. Hist. Fuldens. ii. 1.

In the fourth Book we refuted the accusation brought by some modern authors against the monks when charging them with cruelty; and we observed what was really the monastic discipline in regard to the punishment of offenders. The horrible event of Anastasius, a priest, being buried alive in an ancient crypt among the bodies of the dead by order of Cantinus, bishop of Clermont, a tyrant and usurer, allied with Jews, in revenge for his refusing to give him up some charters ‡, may have led to the strange reports from which such authors took their ideas, and to which Cardan seems to allude where he says, "To be buried alive and suffer atrocious punishments either never happens in the monastic orders, or more rarely than to be impaled or sawed asunder by order of secular judges §." Still, in the theory of the criminal jurisprudence, the mediæval church, as a modern historian observes, "having fully adopted the wise and beneficent doctrine that punishment is to be inflicted by fallible man upon his fellow-creatures, not in terror but in love, and imprisonment being consequently considered as an ecclesiastical penance, not thundered in vengeance for the satisfaction of the state, but imposed for the good of the offender, in order to lead him to repentance and mercy;" the monasteries were deemed not unfitting places for being made the scene of such correction; and,

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* Hist. de Soissons, i. 295.

† Voyage Lit. 48.

‡ Gallia Christiana, ii. 241.

§ De Utilit. ex Advers. iii. 22.

in fact, the policy of those who have transferred criminals elsewhere, seems nothing else but "to drag from heaven the unrepentant soul, which might have quenched in reconciling prayers a life of burning crimes." In the monasteries of the middle ages, therefore, one sometimes found men imprisoned by ecclesiastical as well as by royal sentence. Thus Gottschalk, after being degraded, was confined in Hautvilliers under the Abbot Hilduin, who allowed him the use of pens and ink, though Raban Maur considered this an improper indulgence, and in reply to Pope Nicholas, whose love of justice was not greater than his love of men, and who remonstrated against such severity, thought it enough to show in his own excuse that he had taken care to have him supplied with "all necessaries." In prison, however, there he died, without retraction and without the sacraments *. Some dark solemn men that were known to be within monasteries, wearing the aspect of prisoners by the chains round their bodies, were there, however, by their own desire. Do you demand the reason of such austerity? My answer may be short. Blood hath been shed ere now in the olden time; ay, and since too, murders have been performed. In our times, when the brains are out, men die, and there is thought an end; but in ages of faith they rose again with twenty murders on their crowns, and pushed the slayer from his stool. Then when grace procured contrition, there were fearful penances embraced, till in the cloister the once proud cruel castellain found peace. Thus in an early age were seen, by St. John Climachus, some in the monastery of the penitents who used to entreat that they might not be loosed from their chains even in their sepulchres. "I saw," he says, "what the eye of the negligent hath not seen, and what hath not entered into the heart of the luxurious man to conceive—the deeds and words which can do violence to God. Some I saw who pass whole nights in prayer, others prostrate on ashes. On all sides I heard only such cries as these, 'Væ, væ miserum, me miserum! juste juste, parce, parce Domine!' Some cried, 'Ignosce, ignosce Domine, si possibile est.' Others, as if at the gates of heaven, 'Aperi nobis Judex januam. Aperi nobis ex quo illam nobisipsis per peccatum clausimus.' Others,

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* Staudenmaier, Scot, &c.

'Ostende faciem tuam tantum et salvi erimus.' Others, 'Appare his qui in tenebris et umbra mortis sedent *.'"

The blessed Dominicus, surnamed Loricatus, of whom we before spoke, died in the abbey of Monte Cassino on the 22nd of January, 1031. To that abbey also had come Count Radechis, bound with a huge chain to his neck, who, after killing Grimoald, had been moved to renounce the world, and thus he came to embrace a life of austere penance in that monastery †. Such were the examples which the monks proposed to those who were committed to their custody, as being obnoxious to the vengeance of the law, to which class the prisoners that one found in monasteries generally belonged, being persons confined there by order of the king, or by the sentence of a power wholly secular, often barbarous and despotic. Thus we meet with a certain German whose eyes had been put out and right hand cut off, leading an arduous life in a cell near the abbey of Pomposa, to whom Raimbald, a holy youth, was appointed to minister ‡. Trithemius mentions a most curious circumstance respecting a man most celebrated who fell into this condition. Peter de Vineis, says this abbot, was a German, the chancellor of Frederic II., a cunning man and learned, who defended the injustice of the emperor against the pope with all the force of his eloquence, and excused his rebellion against the church with such ability, that Gregory IX. exclaimed, "O quantus esses fili, si te, ut Imperium, benevolentem haberet Sancta Ecclesia!" Afterwards, by I know not what means, he incurred the resentment of Cæsar, who put out his eyes and sent him into a monastery, where, blind and wretched, he lived in the bitterness of his heart, and by long affliction compensated for whatever sins he had been guilty of against God and the church. It happened after a few years that the emperor being excommunicated, deserted by the princes and despised by foreigners, having no means of paying his army, resolved to have recourse to Peter, his old chancellor, whose prudence he knew surpassed that of most other men. So he came to the monastery where he lived, and being admitted, said all that he could think would mollify and appease the blind recluse, asking his

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* Grad. V. † Chronic. S. Mon. Cass. xx.

‡ Annal. Camaldulens. lib. xii.

pardon with loud protestations of remorse, and promising immense compensation, and in fine adding, "I know that you could give me good advice in these straits." Peter, who concealed his mind under a placid countenance, revolving nothing but immortal revenge, advised him to take the gold and silver vessels of the monasteries and churches to melt them down, and with that produce to pay his troops, and then to invade his enemies, after which he could make restitution. The advice pleased the emperor. So he plundered all the churches, promising to restore whatever he took; but he never returned any thing. From that day he never prospered more. The abbot of the monastery is said to have asked Peter, on hearing that it was he who had given such advice, how a legist and a wise man like him could have recommended so unjust a measure; to whom the other made no secret of the subtle vengeance which had suggested the idea to him of giving such counsels *. The victims of political convulsion were often found in monastic confinement. Desiderius, king of the Lombards, after the battle of Pavia, was led prisoner into Gaul by Charlemagne, as all the annals declare; but they do not mention the place where he spent the remainder of his life, nor the manner of his death. Mabillon discovered these particulars in the manuscript of an ancient monk, where he found these words, "In the year 772, Pavia being taken, Desiderius and his wife Ansa were banished to the abbey of Corby, and there Desiderius persevered in vigils, and prayers, and fasts, and many good works, till the day of his death." Of his being thus confined in Corby, the monks of that abbey, when Mabillon wrote, had lost all tradition. Down to the French revolution visitors to the abbey of St. Medard at Soissons used to be shown a cell which was said to have been the prison of Louis-le-Débonnaire where he was confined by order of Lothaire. "The good brethren," says that poor emperor, "had great compassion on my grief, and they comforted me much. They prayed for me, and assured me that if I placed all my hopes in God, I should soon have consolation and recovery from my sorrows." By order of his sons, sergeants were placed about the prison to guard him; and that abbey in particular was chosen,

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* In Chronic. Hirsaugiens. an. 1229.

because knowing how much he loved it, his sons hoped that he would willingly resign his sceptre and embrace the monastic habit *. The monk Odilon has recorded the very words of the unhappy emperor's lamentation. This gaol belonged to the fisc, to the royal palace, and not to the abbey. It was near the Basilica of the Trinity on the north part of the enclosure. One still sees two half-subterraneous cells to the north-east of the crypt of the Great Church and to the south of the site of the Basilica of the Trinity, which are said to have been the prison of Louis. On these walls one can trace in Gothic letters—

"Hélas! je suys bien prins
De douleurs que j'endure:
Morrir me conviendroit: la
Peine me tient dure."

But these lines, written no doubt by some prisoner, are posterior, by 600 years, to Louis †.

Sometimes, however, the secular power, in committing prisoners to the custody of monks, only complied with their entreaties, which were offered in a spirit of the tenderest charity. Thus Cæsar of Heisterbach says, "At the time when king Otho went to Rome to be crowned emperor, leaving the government of the Moselle to his brother, Henry Palatine, a certain noble was condemned to death for pillaging. Daniel, abbot of Sconavia, by his prayers, obtained pardon for him on condition that he would satisfy God for his sins in the Cistercian order. Thus did he escape death and final perdition; and I have heard of many who similarly obtained deliverance by the intercession of our order ‡." Duke Henry, the Saxon, father of the emperor Otho, having put out the eyes of a certain nobleman for his crimes, God of his mercy converted that punishment into a medicine; for he gave him such contrition that he used to be always in the church of the abbey of Hilderhem mourning for his sins, and breathing after the celestial country §. In the annals of Corby, at the date of 1189, we find this brief notice, "A certain nobleman is sent into our monastery

* Chroniques de S. Denis, i.

† Hist. de Soissons, i. 316.

‡ Illust. Mirac. lib. i. c. 31.

§ Id. lib. ii. 36.

for the sake of penance *." In the Escurial is a chamber where the tradition of the monastery attests that the unfortunate Don Carlos terminated his days by refusing food. Even so late as the time of Francis I. we find it usual to send state prisoners for confinement to the abbey of Mount St. Michael †. The motive, however, as we before observed, cannot but be esteemed most worthy of those who loved and followed peace.

But having now specified some of the chief abuses which crept into the monastic institution, at the same time guarding the reader from mistaking for abuse what was in reality laudable, and suggested the reflections to which they ought to give rise in minds unprejudiced, let us observe what evidence may be collected from unimpeachable witnesses, who lived in the middle ages, to prove the virtues and perfection of discipline which existed in the monasteries; that we may not depart with such an erroneous impression as that the evil had counterpoised the good. The language of these witnesses is that of prudence, as well as of admiration. "Of the sanctity of many, no one can judge more truly than the Searcher of hearts," says the monastic historian of the Cistercians; "yet we speak what we have heard and known concerning our abbots ‡." Let us hear, then, what was the result of their knowledge. "If there be any perfection in this world, it can be found in cloisters §:" such is the evidence of Hugo of St. Victor. "Truly," says St. Bernard, "you can behold, in almost all congregations of monks, some men that are filled with consolations, abounding in joy, always cheerful and agreeable, fervent in spirit, meditating day and night on the law of God, frequently looking up to heaven and lifting up pure hands in prayer, careful observers of their conscience, and devout followers of good works; to whom discipline is lovely, fasting sweet, the vigils short, manual labour pleasant, and the whole austerity of their conversation refreshing ||." "I see in cloisters," says Peter of Blois, who was himself a secular priest, "celestial men,

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* An. Corb. ap. Leibnitz. Script. Bruns. iii.

† Raoul Hist. de Mont. S. Michel.

‡ Gasp. Jong. Notit. Abb. Ord. Cist. lib. iv. 16.

§ De Claustro Animæ, ii. 17.

|| Id. In Ascensione Dom. Serm. vi.

or rather earthly angels, whose conversation is in heaven, —who, with a certain noble pride, despise the honours and riches of this world *." Hear how those who knew the monks personally speak: "If any one asks me," says the Abbot de Rancè, speaking of Brother Euthyme III., "whether this monk has or has not sinned since he came under our direction? I answer, by the principles of faith, he has sinned, since the Holy Ghost teaches us, 'Non est enim homo qui non peccet †;' but I answer, by my own knowledge and according to my observation, he has not sinned ‡."

Odelirius, counsellor of Roger, earl of Shrewsbury, has immortalised his name by his eloquent exhortations to that nobleman, in 1083, in praise of monks and the monastic discipline. "Who," he exclaims, "can worthily relate all their vigils, hymns, psalmody, prayers, alms, and sacrifices! What denial of their own will for the love of our Lord Jesus Christ! What shall I say of the chastity of monks, of their silence, of their modesty, of their obedience? Such an abundance of virtues confounds my astonished intelligence, and I confess that my tongue fails me to express it. From my tender youth I have long been admitted to the secrets of monks; and, by familiar relations, I have learned thoroughly what were their manners. In consequence, when I consider the conduct of all mortals who inhabit the earth, I see that they are all, in their lives, inferior to monks who live canonically according to the rules of their order §." Richard, archbishop of Canterbury, in the reign of Henry II., writing to the Cistercian order, says, "Among all the orders with which the Spouse of Christ is adorned, there is none more fragrant with virtue, none sweeter in Christ with the odour of a holy reputation, than yours." Yet he blames them for one thing,—"because the lands which were subject to tithes, before they possessed them, are made exempt by the fact of coming into their hands ||." Peter of Blois bears a similar testimony to the Cistercians. "There," he says, "is a most approved school of religion; there one finds the practice of the utmost modesty, regularity of manners, the affection of

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* Epist. cii.

† Lib. 2 Reg. viii.

‡ Relat. de la Mort de quelques Rel. i.

§ Orderic Vital. lib. v.

|| Pet. Bles. Epist. 82.

fraternity, peace of mind, the communication of all things, mutual service, rigour of discipline, the love of obedience, the bond of charity, the subjection of the flesh, the exercise of hospitality, liberty of study, the order of vigils, the calm of meditation, the devotion of psalmody *." To the Carthusian order—which, in fact, has never required reform to the present day—he bears the same. "Through all lands," he says, "by the grace of God, its fame hath gone forth, and the odour of its sweetness hath reached to the ends of the earth : for it is the plantation of God, and the vine of the Lord of Sabaoth ; therefore now has its fruit multiplied to an immense increase. Behold how it stretches forth its branches, now even to the sea, and its outshoots as far as England †!" Would you inquire now concerning "the lambs that Francis and Dominic led along the way where well they throve, not swollen with vanity ‡?" As Dante says, "he tells of both, who one commendeth, which of them soe'er be taken : for their deeds were to one end §." Cornelius Mussus Bitontinus says that the world was reformed by these two, Dominic and Francis. In the beginning of the evangelic announcement, he observes, when the word of the Lord was preached to the Jews and Gentiles, two were chosen, Peter and Paul. When the world had relapsed to vices, and the Lord in mercy wished to reform it, he again chose two,—the one cherubic, the other seraphic,—two bodies, but one mind ||. Pope Urban IV. styles the order of Minors, "that field of virtues which the Lord hath blessed ¶." Even the incidental tribute paid to it by a worldly poet will be to some no less satisfactory ; as when Octavien de Saint-Gelais, in his "Séjour d'Honneur," while describing the vanity of his early life, and his fear of lightning, acknowledges that while in that state, whenever it thundered, he wished to be a Franciscan :—

"———— pour lors estre convers
Ou cordelier chantant hymnes et vers **."

The learned Albertus Sartiunensis having received from his friend, Nicholas Niccoli, a mordant invective against

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* Id. 86. † Id. 86. ‡ Dante, i. 10. § Par. xi.

|| Wadding, Apparat. ad Annal.

¶ Ap. Martene, Vet. Script. ii. 1261.

** Goujet, Bibliothèque Franç. tom. x. 263.

the Fathers, of the observance written by the famous Poggio Brandolino, whose enmity arose from a family pique, wrote a formal reply, wishing to defend, he says, these most innocent men, with whom he has conversed, as a brother, during fourteen years. "You consider," he says to Poggio, "as not worthy of the highest honour, those who, in my opinion, do all things well,—who are grateful to their friends, pacific to their enemies, solicitous for the dangers of others, and not negligent to their own, —who, casting off the pollutions of the world, condemn what they once were, and love what they are to be in the future life, make themselves judges of their own wanderings, exult in having escaped from the disquietudes and tempests of the world, and, with minds far above it, superior to all earthly power, devote themselves to virtue and justice, forgetting what is behind, and stretching forwards to what is before, think life tedious and death most happy,—whose care it is never to yield to vice, but to subdue it,—who deplore the passions of the profligate, having restrained their own by discipline,—who, through evil report and good report, in cold and poverty, pursue their steady way, rejoicing more than the vulgar and foolish multitude in their vanities,—and, what is above all, who so completely subject and humiliate and neglect themselves for Christ, that they bring into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ, and fear not to be counted fools for his sake, saying with the Apostle, 'If any one seem to be wise in this world, let him become a fool, that he may be wise,'—lo! this is what I think of these men: such I know to be the pure and excellent lives of many of them; such, at least, the innocuous character of the rest *."

This brings us down to an age of great degeneracy: yet, let it be observed, that there is still a cloud of witnesses, who give the same evidence. Observe what learning and sanctity the celebrated Ambrose Traversari of Camaldoli found in the numerous monasteries of his order in Italy, when, as prior-general, in 1433, he made his visitation. Again, on his journey from Basle to Vienna, in 1435, he says, "many most noble monasteries we found on the banks of the Danube, in which the monks lived most religiously †."

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* Ap. Wadding, tom. x.

† Annal. Camald. lib. lxii.

In 1415, an Italian author thus speaks: "What shall I say of monks, of which the number of most holy and learned seems almost infinite? We cannot deny that now and formerly there have been bad men in that habit: but who could number the good and illustrious? Who so mad as to think that if men wished to be evil, they would choose such a life as this? Truly, long since, all devotion of Christians, and nearly all religion, would have perished, if these holy men had not, by their doctrine and example of life, protected the faith of Christ, contending for it, as the Apostle says, 'through evil report and good report.' Men are disposed to criticise the conduct of monks with more severity than justice; and those are counted monsters who are detected falling in the least from the rule of perfection. I think it often happens that many, desirous of calumniating them before the vulgar, say things of them which are far from true, ascribing their poor habit, grave speech and aspect, to hypocrisy; their preaching, to vanity; their cheerfulness, to scurrility; their justice, to cruelty; their care to preserve the rights of the Church, to avarice and rapacity: for all things are full of calumny, and thus did men declaim against the Apostles and against Christ *."

In 1708 and 1718, it was resolved, in the general chapter at Marmoutier, to depute two monks to travel, in order to visit the archives of different abbeys in France and Germany. Dom Martene and Dom Durand proceeded accordingly on this visitation; and their testimony as to the perfection which then prevailed, with few exceptions, in the religious houses, is to the highest degree delightful and conclusive †. Even the arch-sophist of France, in modern times, bears this testimony: "It cannot be denied," he says, "that there were great virtues in the cloister. There is hardly still a monastery which does not contain some admirable souls ‡."

If, now, from these general statements, we pass to the examination of more particular evidence, the result will be no less consoling. William of Malmesbury says of the abbey of Thorney, "Truly I might call that island the

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* Benedict Accolti Aretini De Præstantia Virorum sui Ævi. Dialog. Thesaur. Antiq. Italiæ, ix.

† Voyage Lit. de Deux Bénédict. See also Vet. Script. Præf. in tom. ix.

‡ Volt. Essai sur les Mœurs, &c.

abode of chastity and of all virtues, and a school of divine philosophers *." Wythmann, abbot of Ramsey, was a man who sought rather to govern by fear than love, so that there were often occasions of harsh retorts. On one of these, being greatly exasperated, he went to Aetheric, the bishop of the diocese, and accused the monks of insubordination and disorder. The bishop, who had been educated in that house, was inclined to give no credit to the accusation; for he could not believe that the men whose piety he had known when a boy could so soon have fallen from the love of discipline. Therefore, consoling the abbot with some general words, and sending him away, he secretly resolved to visit the abbey in disguise, to judge with his own eyes as to the justice of the charge. So, coming to the island, and lodging in the neighbourhood, he arrived very early in the morning, in disguise of a traveller, and entered the monastery as if for the sake of praying; and, as every place stood open to all comers, he began to examine all things carefully: then he saw some at private altars, devoutly celebrating mass; others praying around the high altar; others sitting in thick order between the pillars of the cloister, either reading in profound silence, or else writing or employed in some other useful exercise. After a while, one of the brethren, observing the curiosity with which he examined every part of the house, began to wonder at him; and at length, discovering him to be the bishop, hastened and informed the abbot, who came forth to receive the guest. But Aetheric reproved him severely, and admonished him to be less suspicious and morose in his government of the abbey, and reminded him of the express injunctions of St. Benedict on this head; and then, concluding with words of peace to the brethren as well as to the abbot, he departed. But the abbot, reflecting on his own faults, and the obstacles occasioned by the violence of his temper, resigned the administration of the abbey, and, taking leave of the brethren, set out on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Æthelstan was elected in his place. After a year, Wythmann returned; and the fame of his approach reached Ramsey at the moment when Æthelstan, with the monks, were sitting in the refectory. Immediately, he ordered the

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* In Lib. iv. De Gest. Pontif. Ang.

lector to stop reading, and, putting on the sacred vestments, they all proceeded with great reverence to meet the former abbot. But he, remembering his faults, humbly refused to re-assume his authority, and chose for his residence a solitary place called Northeya, which is but a stone's-throw from the church, but inaccessible, excepting by a boat; and there, with one monk for his companion, and two servants, he spent the remainder of his days *.

To such monasteries our old English poet thus alludes:—

"There was an auncient house, not far away,
Renown'd throughout the world for sacred lore
And pure unspotted life; so well, they say,
It governed was, and guided evermore †."

England, in fact, possessed many such. Lydgate, while lamenting his own disobedient sensual life, following the reverse of all that he was taught, and taking little heed "what Christ Jesus suffered for his sake," acknowledges that the discipline of the abbey at Bury was excellent:—

"This holy rule was unto me radde
And expounde in full notable wyse
By vertuous men, relygious and sadde,
Full well expert, dyscrete, prudent, and wyse,
And observauntes of many gootly emprise,
I herde all well, but towchyng to the dede
Of that they taught, I toke but lytell hede."

In the twelfth century, when Suger was abbot of St. Denis, the two Cistercian abbeys of Rivaulx and Fountains, in the diocese of York, were in great reputation of sanctity. Of the latter, Gaspar Jongelinus says that it drew its name from certain fountains, which were a happy presage of its future holiness: for truly, he adds, there were there in abundance the waters of celestial desire, and of living piety, which spring up to life eternal ‡. But let us look elsewhere. St. Peter Damian visited Mount Cassino, and thus describes it: "All here were either aged, or young men rejoicing in the decorum

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* Hist. Ramesiens. ap. Gale, Hist. Brit. tom. ii.

† Spenser, ii. 10.

‡ Notitiæ Abbat. Ord. Cister. per Univ. Orb. lib. viii. 5.

of youthful life,—who, as sons of the prophets, were fit to seek Elias through the desert; or truly, in the flower of youth, like the Apostle John, to overcome the wicked one *." That was a fine tribute to the virtue of the monastery of Septimus which Marsilius Ficinus paid, in writing to Francis Soderino, bishop of Volterra, where he says, "I know indeed how you love these monks; those pious men, whom I also not only love, but worship †." Scardeoneo, a secular priest, speaking of the convent of St. Mark at Padua, adds this testimony: "Which to this day flourishes in the highest opinion of sanctity ‡." Ermenric, monk of Richenau, in his epistle "De Grammatica," thus speaks of the monks of St. Gall: "There I found each more humble and more patient than the other. Nor is there any bitter zeal amongst them, or malice, or envy; but charity alone reigns there, along with justice. Love, the mother of virtues, and Concord, its daughter, and Simplicity, its attendant, have there, without doubt, their proper dwelling §." Adalbero, bishop of Verona, came to St. Gall for the sake of prayer. "The grace of this place," saith he, "is greater than its fame: here is religion with learning, severity with discipline. What others may think I know not; but I will declare my impressions. I came here seeking one saint, and a dead one; but, sooth, I found many saints, and living ones ||."

Many of the brief notices of the abbots of Corby in Saxony, given in the annals of that abbey, indicate a happy state of religion as prevailing at the time. Thus, at the date of 876, we read, "Our Adelgarius died, and so our mother was a widow; Tancmar, a good Father, succeeded him. In 880, Avo died, worthy of a longer life; Bovo, a man circumspect, succeeded him. In 918, Volkmar, who restored the church as well as he could, was a good father of the family, and religious abbot, beloved by all, but whom God reserved for horrible times, on account of public evils; therefore, to prayers and tears, his strongest arms, he exhorted us seriously ¶."

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* Epist. xvii.

† Epist. lib. xi.

‡ De Antiquitate Pataviæ.

§ Ap. Heumann, De Re Diplom. ii. 187.

|| Eckehard de Casibus S. Galli, c. i. ap. Goldast. i.

¶ Ap. Leibnitz, Script. Bruns. iii.

Turning to France, the only difficulty is to choose between testimonies of equal force, in proof of the sanctity which existed in her religious houses. Fifty-nine abbots had governed the abbey of Clairmarais, from 1140 to 1790, to whom we have this testimony: "Their conduct was exemplary in the interior of the cloister, worthy and honourable towards other monasteries, towards the bishops of the diocese, towards the seigneurs of the country, and, we need not add, towards the people *." Guibert, abbot of Gemblour, says of the monks of St. Martin at Tours, in his letter to Philip, archbishop of Cologne, "Nothing is there undisciplined, nothing inordinate; all things are quiet, consonant; nothing being under, nothing over done; but all things, by disposition of wisdom, are, in measure, weight, and number, as far as is possible to human infirmity, so that they seem members of that Church cohering to itself, solicitous to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace: the whole body compact is connected, and every juncture cemented, and every disturbance appeased: there dwells the wolf with the lamb, the leopard with the kid, and a child can lead them; that Child, I mean, of whom it is written, 'Puer natus est nobis;' and in that holy house of God, whose place is made in peace, they dwell concordant and unanimous †." Lupus, abbot of Ferrers, in his letter to the monks of St. Germain at Auxerre, says, "True charity, indeed, always flourishes in the inhabitants of our monasteries, but never has it declared its greatness by so many certain proofs as in our time ‡." Cluny obtained this well-deserved praise from St. Gregory VII. at the general council: "That, through the grace of God, under holy and pious abbots, it had attained to such dignity and religious strictness, that, in the service of God and spiritual fervour, it surpassed all other communities, ancient and modern; and that no abbey in all the world was to be compared to it: for there had been no abbot there who was not a saint." Of Cîteaux, Pope Eugene III., in 1152, said that it flourished in the fame of sacred religion. The third abbot of this house was Stephen Harding, of a noble English family, "decorated with the grace of eminent sanctity, a lover of

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[*] Piers, Hist. des Abbayes de Watten. et de Clairm. 165.

[†] Ap. Martene, Vet. Script. i. Præf.

[‡] Epist. 116.

the desert, and a most fervent emulator of holy poverty," as he is styled in the book of the origins of Cisteaux. In the archives it is said of him:—

> "Anglicus hic Stephanus fulsit velut Angelus unus
> Sacrata veste Bernardum vestiit iste."

The three daughters of Cisteaux,—the abbey of La Ferté, that of Pontigny, and Clairvaux,—were all true sources of spiritual life. Peter de Roya, who styles himself, "by the mercy of God, a novice at Clairvaux," writes as follows to the superior of another house: "It was not strange that I should become thoughtful and solicitous, when I reflected on the manner of my past life, not having lived a moment from my childhood without performing some work of death. Greatly I loved the assemblies of vanity, spectacles, jests, idleness; to utter falsehood, to swear, to commit perjury, to flatter: all these, from long daily custom, I learned to consider not sins, but, as it were, certain agreeable ornaments of society and mundane probity. Yet I knew that these same things, causing a separation between God and man, were vanities and lies. I omit greater things,—elation of heart, emulations, hatred, dissensions, detractions:—but the Father of mercies had compassion on me, and at length visited and drew me to his Son. Thus was I saved from the waters of Babylon, and mercifully placed in Clairvaux, at the fountains of the Saviour. For Clairvaux, though situated in a valley, has its foundations on the holy mountains, whose gates the Lord loveth more than the tabernacles of Jacob. Glorious things are told of these, because of them. The glorious and wonderful God worketh glorious and wonderful things: for there the inveterate return to their heart; and, though their exterior man be corrupted, yet the interior is restored to life, and renewed from day to day in Him who created man. There the proud are humbled, the rich impoverished, the poor evangelized, and the darkness of sins transmuted into light. In this house, therefore, though the multitude gathered together from the ends of the earth is immense, congregated from all regions and nations, yet is there only one heart and one mind; so that of this house we may truly say, 'Ecce alienigenæ, et Tyrus, et populus Æthiopum, hi fuerunt illic.' This is the habitation of all these, rejoicing not with vain joy. But as for me, the more diligently I examine these poor of blessed life, the more thoroughly am I convinced that they follow Christ in all things, and that they are true ministers of God. For, while at prayer, speaking to God in spirit and in truth, and while I have conversed privately with them in a familiar manner, and when I have remarked their humble manner of conducting themselves, it is plainly evident that they are the familiar friends of God. While praising him in the choral psalmody, the whole state of their body, in all the fear and reverence of sanctity, shows how pure and how fervent is the affection of their mind. Their solemn enunciation, and morose distinction, in modulating the Psalms, shows how sweet in their mouths are the words of God. When I observe them in the diurnal hours, and in the nocturnal vigils before midnight, till prime, with only a short interval between, so holily and indefatigably singing, they seem to me indeed little less than the angels, but much more than men. Such continued alacrity, and such endurance, with such fervour and merit, can only be from a divine gift. Whilst reading they seem lightly to draw the waters of Siloe, with silence flowing and gushing up to eternal life. Their disposition and habit demonstrate that they are all disciples of one Master, teaching in their hearts, and saying, 'Audi Israel et tacent.' They are silent; and they hear, and they become wiser. If we regard them in the exercise of manual labour, their life will appear no less happy. In all these works, it is evident that they are led by a divine Spirit. With such a patient mind, such a placid and immoveable countenance, with such sweet and holy order, they do all things, that though their labour is great, yet they scarcely seem to move, or to be oppressed in any respect. Amongst these poor I understand some are bishops, others consuls, others illustrious men of great science and dignity, others youths of great birth and hope; but now, by the grace of God, all acceptation of persons being eradicated, the higher any one supposed himself in the world, the lower does he make himself in this little flock. Therefore, when I beheld these men in the gardens with their rakes, in the meadows with their forks, in the fields with their ploughs, in the woods with their hatchets, while considering what they were, I look on their present state, their works, instruments, abject persons, disorded and vile vestments, according to the judgment of the eyes, they seem to me not men, but a foolish race, a mute, shameful flock, the opprobrium of men, and the outcasts of the people; but a sound and faithful intellect proclaims to me, in the heart, that their life is hidden in Christ. Amongst them I rejoice to see Gaufrid Peronensis, Raynald Morinensis, Waller de Insula, and another, whom I knew once the most inveterate in the old man; but now, by the grace of God, not even a vestige of that ancient mind remains in them. In the old man, I knew them with an exalted heart, walking with supercilious eyes; but now I see them humbled under the merciful hand of God. In the old man I knew them as whitened sepulchres without, within full of dead men's bones; but now I behold them as vessels of the Lord, which, although they may appear outwardly despicable, yet within are full of celestial perfumes. When, therefore, this community is seen going out to its accustomed labour or returning regularly and simply one after another, as if a pacific host wearing only the arms of peace, must not the angels of God, seeing them thus move, so newly converted from darkness to Christ, sing through joy and admiration? The excluded demon is confounded and filled with grief, seeing what I trust he may always see, the resurrection of these,—bringing no moderate destruction on his own kingdom. Again, what think you must be the impression on seeing them at table at the appointed times for food! Truly, they evince such modesty, such holiness, that they must appear to every one what they are,—just men and fearing God. Here they receive the spiritual food for which they hunger,—the Word of Life; here they reverently partake of the other gifts of God placed before them, not exquisite delights, but of the labour of their hands, vegetables and grain of the earth. Cyder is their drink. If they cannot have this, they rejoice in simple water. Rarely they use wine. In a word, obedience is the rule of their whole life; which they so faithfully observe in all things, that there is not a single moment of the day or night which is not offered up to God; so that I firmly believe by every step and movement of their hands they gain remission of sin, or increase of the crown to life eternal. These few things concerning the poor of Clairvaux I send to you, according to my promise. There remain greater things; but to describe them I am not sufficient. All my desire is to be associated in body and spirit with these poor of Christ. God willing, on the Sunday after the Ascension we are to receive the armour of our profession, by the grace and benediction of Jesus Christ; which, by the merits of his Mother, and your prayers, may He grant to us. Amen*."

Innumerable houses retained the fervour and regularity of monastic life down to the latest times. The abbey of St. Jean-des-Vignes at Soissons, founded in 1076, by Hugues, Seigneur de Château-Thierry, had never wanted reform down to the year 1718, when Dom Martene visited it, and found its discipline so perfect †. Bourdoise, that model of the secular clergy, in the reign of Louis XIII., describes in glowing terms the edification which he received from visiting the abbey of Jumiège ‡, which, down to the Revolution, was a blessing to the country. "On arriving at Corby in Saxony," say the two Benedictine travellers, "we were received as brothers. The abbot is very humble; and, only for the honour paid to him, one would never suppose that he was a prince, and had the prerogatives of a sovereign. We were greatly edified by all persons of the community §." We found the abbey of Prum retaining great discipline. The prior is esteemed a saint all through the country; and the monks are most devout and mortified. The only charge advanced against the prior, is, that he lives too retired, and that he does not see strangers sufficiently ||. On arriving at Treves we descended at the abbey of St. Maximin, where we were received with the utmost cordiality. We can say confidently that God is well served in this house. All the holy practices of religion are admirably observed. Their chant is majestic, their ceremonial venerable. Although the apartments for guests are magnificent, those of the abbot are simple, and contain only necessaries. During our stay we saw nothing but what was most edifying ¶.

If these testimonies are not sufficient, I know not what would satisfy us. We might sum up the evidence in the words of a French historian, and say,—"In abbeys, the

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* St. Bernard, Epist. 441.

† Voyage Lit. 24.

‡ Vie de Bourdoise, liv. iii. 246.

§ Id. i. 257.

|| Id. 273.

¶ Id. 285.

high ideal of the middle ages was realised *." Beyond this it would not, methinks, be possible to find terms that would convey praise,—of course, supposing them addressed to persons competently instructed.

But now, having been for some time under the holy roof, let us institute an inquiry which this allusion to the apartments for guests may naturally suggest and demand,—Who are the men that come occasionally to visit these sanctuaries of God and peace?

CHAPTER XII.

Many come to the abbey. Many from each of the various conditions into which is divided the social life of man. They come all at once in multitudes on days of solemn festival. They come one by one, secretly, by stealth, seeking to assuage the intolerable thirst which presses them with some drops from the fountains of paradise, which they know, or at least suspect, are opened here. Let us hear instances related by the witnesses who saw them come.

"We inhabit the woods; and the leafy coverings of trees are more familiar to us than the stone walls of houses," says brother Gislebert, writing to Peter the venerable abbot of Cluny; "yet we are not hermits so solitary as to resemble the sparrow alone upon the housetop. Though we have penetrated into this vast forest for the sake of solitude, yet we draw after us such a crowd of men, that we seem to have constructed rather a city than a hermitage; for to say nothing of that tumultuous multitude which flocks here from all the surrounding country, in order to have disputes settled, and discords appeased, and judicial sentences modified, the parts of the east beyond the sea, and the transalpine nations of the west, send such a number of embassadors to us, that it would require more than the care of the greatest king to give an answer to them all †." The dignity of this act of making peace was then deemed

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* Michelet.

† Biblioth. Cluniacens. 863.

worth the audience of kings and princes, who often attended on these occasions.

Rodulphus, describing the concourse of people that used to visit the abbey of St. Tron, says, "Such a crowd of persons, nobles, and farmers, and persons of both sexes, used to direct their course to our gates, along the roads, and over the fields, and through the meadows, especially on solemn days, that dwelling in leafy tents and tabernacles of bark, for no houses could contain them, the whole place seemed besieged. Then there was the crowd of merchants, who could scarcely find horses and chariots, carts and animals, to carry such a multitude of strangers. Then how shall I describe the oblations at the altar? I say nothing of the animals, horses, oxen, heifers, rams, sheep, which used to be offered in an incredible multitude; but also they used to present beyond all weight and number linen and wax, bread and cheese; and by the time of vespers the guards in the cloister used to be fatigued in receiving and heaping up the piles of money, though they had nothing else to do *."

In the annals of the abbey of Corby, in Saxony, we have this significant notice. "In 950 a domus mercatoria was built for the accommodation and security of merchants coming to the festival of St. Vitus." Throughout the whole year crowds of pilgrims used to visit the abbey of Einsiedelin. A writer in 1373 says, that there strangers were continually arriving and departing. In 1350, on the 14th of September, that abbey received one hundred deputies from the citizens of Basle, and seventy from those of Strasbourg. Two years before, on the vigil of St. Simon and St. Jude, the affluence from all parts of Europe was so great, that the cantons of Zurich and Schwitz took alarm. In 1636, the town of Uberlingen, grateful for its deliverance from the Swedes, sent to it a deputation of 550 persons; and many other towns used to make votive processions to it annually. In one year the number of pilgrims amounted to 180,000 †; and among these kneeling youths, these boy-travellers, whose stained shoulders bore impress of the load they had

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* Chronic. Abbatiæ S. Trudonis, lib. i. apud Dacher. Spicileg. tom. vii. p. 356.

† Chronique d'Einsidlen.

carried over the mountains through the sultry day, might be distinguished often the fervent disciples of far-distant schools, sons of the noblest houses in Europe, thus prepared by labours like those of the poor to taste the sweets with which innocence was in such places filled.

There being great indulgences on the anniversary of the dedication of the church of the abbey of Riddershusen, in the duchy of Brunswick, which fell on the 15th of June, that festivity was changed after eighty years; for the crowd from the neighbouring towns and villages, says the Abbot Jongelinus, was so great, that the corn used to be trodden down, and the crops injured by the multitude, who used even to cut down the slighter trees to erect booths. Therefore to remove all cause of offending man and God, the Abbot Eggelingus, with consent of the superiors of the Cistercian order and of Pope Innocent VI., transferred it to the Sunday after St. Martin, as to a less genial season *.

When the new church of Mount Cassino was to be consecrated, Hildebrand, at that time archdeacon, cardinals, and priests, and magnats, came there, with bishops, abbots, monks, clerks, princes, nobles, and citizens of all condition, with women also from all parts of Italy, in such crowds that it would be easier to count the stars of heaven than to enumerate them all. Not only all the courts of the monastery, but the whole mountain, from the foot to the summit, and even the fields around it, were covered with the multitude; and during the three preceding days, wine, bread, flesh, and fish were given in such abundance, that not one person of that prodigious multitude could complain of not having received sufficient. There were present ten archbishops, forty-three bishops, Richard prince of Capua, with his son, and brother Gisulfus, prince of Salerno, and his brother Landulfus, prince of Beneventum, Sergius duke of Naples, with Sergius duke of Sorentum: and as for the other princes and nobles, both Italian and Norman, it would be impossible to name them. So the church was dedicated, in the year 1071, with the utmost devotion, and joy, and honour, and glory. The crowd continued during eight days, confessing their sins to gain

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* Notit. Abb. Ord. Cister. per Univ. Orb. lib. iii. 42.

the indulgence, and then all returned to their homes in great joy.

> "Nec modus est populis coëuntibus agmine denso,
> Nec requies; properant in lucem à nocte, diemque
> Expectare piget."

> "Milia profundens ad mœnia celsa Casini,
> Vincit iter durum pietas, amor, et Benedicti.
> Vincit et alma fides præsens de omnibus istic
> Creditur, et summi Benedictus gloria Christi."

In fine, each one would have deemed himself an infidel, or most wretched, if at least he could not have come in for the end of such a solemnity*.

Popes, emperors, kings, princes, and great noblemen, were often in the list of visitors to abbeys in the middle ages, when the solemnities of religion attracted them. Cluny and Mount Cassino could boast of having often received to hospitality the vicars of Christ. That was a memorable scene which ensued in the church of the latter abbey, when Pope Adrian II. gave absolution to the emperor Lothaire, who, with all his courtiers, committed perjury to obtain it, and so partook of death, receiving the communion to judgment, which fell almost suddenly upon them!

In the Benedictine abbey at Ferrara I read an inscription, stating how Pope Pius VI., on his return from Germany, had stopped in that abbey, and delighted the monks with his cheerful, angelic countenance, and humane conversation.

In the Carthusian monastery, on the Roman way, three miles from Florence, I was shown the cell in which the same holy pontiff lodged in darker times. That evening all was silent in its solemn corridores, save that the voices of the monks, chanting vespers in the church, were faintly heard in the distance. The solemn convent of the Dominicans at Sienna is still standing, which once received within it St. Thomas of Aquin, St. Antoninus, blessed Ambrogio, and Guido Lusignan, king of Cyprus. Here, in 1462, was held a general chapter of fifteen hundred friars: and here, in 1464, Pius II. blessed the standard of the Crusaders.

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* Chronic. Casinensis, lib. iii. c. 22.

In the ancient monastery of Grotta Ferrata there is a solemn painting, to represent the emperor, Otho III., arriving there, and St. Nilus, with his monks, proceeding forth to meet him. That emperor, through remorse for having caused the rebel Crescentius to be beheaded after he had capitulated, having walked barefoot to the sanctuary of St. Michael, on Mount Gargano, passed a whole Lent as a penitent in the monastery of Classe. In that season it was common to find crowned heads under the cloisters of St. Benedict. Thus we find king Charles the Bald passing the Lent and Easter festival of the year 869 in the abbey of St. Denis *.

In the great abbey of St. Maur des Fossés king Henry I. testified, by a charter of the year 1058, that he used often to come there to pray. Louis VII. came there in 1168. Philippe Auguste lodged there in Mid-Lent in 1223. St. Louis was there in 1229 and 1254. The emperor Charles IV. came there twice in 1377 to perform his devotions †. Orderic Vitalis says, that when Boemond, after his deliverance, had left St. Leonard-le-Noblet, having made his prayers at the tomb of the holy confessor, he spent the Lent in travelling through France, making his offers at many altars. He had great reason to rejoice in the monasteries, where he was received with open arms, and he returned thanks to God for the benignity of the western Christians. He was accompanied by the son of the emperor Diogenes, as well as by many other illustrious Greeks ‡.

The emperor Lewis II., celebrating Easter in the abbey of Fulda, was heard to say, "O I wish that I might always remain in this court of heaven, and die in it! What can be desired more delightful and profitable § ?"

Orderic Vitalis mentions that Count Richard, son of Richard I. of Normandy, used to hold his court at Easter in the monastery of Fécamp, founded by his father, and make offerings at the solemnity before the altar of the Holy Trinity. The same day, after mass, before going to his court and dining with his barons, he used, with his two sons, Richard and Robert, to repair to the refectory of the monks; and the two youths, taking the dishes from the kitchen window, used to present them

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* Lebœuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, iii.

† Id. v. 135.

‡ Lib. xi.

§ Schannat. Hist. Fuldens. i.

to their father, as the monks used to do; and then he used to place them, first before the abbot, and then before the monks. When he had so done, with great humility he used to present himself to the abbot, and obtain permission to depart, and then he went to the court gaily with a contented heart. One day Richard came to Jumiège, and passed the night there. The next morning, after saying his prayers, he placed on the altar a little piece of wood. When he was withdrawn, the Sacristans approached the altar, expecting to find a mark, or an ounce of gold, or something similar. Finding only this little piece of wood, they were astonished. At length they asked him why he placed such a thing on the altar. Then he told them that it was Vimoutier, a certain manor, which he wished to give them for the salvation of his soul.

Independent of such visits, many religious houses were visited on certain occasions by a kind of domestic court. The hundred knights attached to the estates of the abbey of St. Riquier composed a retinue almost royal at Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost. The chapter or general assembly of the knights of St. Michael was held every year in the hall of the knights, in the abbey of Mount St. Michael, on the 29th of September.

In 1113, Henry, King of England, accompanied by many princes and prelates, came to the abbey of Ouches and celebrated the Purification of St. Mary. He remained a long time in the cloister of the monks, examined them carefully during the repast, and having considered the conventual customs, praised them highly. The next day he entered the chapter-room and humbly besought the monks to grant him the favour of their association *.

King Canute, with Queen Emma, and the grandees of his kingdom, proposing to celebrate the festival of the Purification of St. Mary in the abbey of Ely, proceeded thither in boats. As they approached near, the King ordered the rowers to rest upon their oars, that he might gaze upon the church which rose above the bank. Then it was that he heard the chant of the monks, which filled him with such joy, that he broke forth in the song, "Merry sungen the Monches of Ely," which was ever

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* Orderic. Vit. lib. xi.

afterwards a common song, and proverbial in the country. Then landing, he was received at the church processionally by the abbot and monks, according to the custom of receiving great men. This King used sometimes to be drawn in a sledge over the ice to Ely, when it was not possible to approach it in any other manner *.

In the annals of Corby, in Saxony, we read at the date of 867 as follows: " Lewis the younger made his devotions in our monastery, praising the discipline of our brethren, and saying that there was no happier life than that of monks always conversing with God. From Corby he went to Herivortium." Again in 940 " the Seigneur de Woldenberg came wounded to the monastery, desiring to pass the night in prayer and fasting near the relics of St. Vitus. He was better next day, and soon quite cured. He was grateful. In 1136, Lotharius Augustus stayed in the monastery some time. In 1378, many nobles were with us this summer, and each was gracious †." In the abbey of Einsiedelin, are records attesting the arrival of distinguished pilgrims. There we read that the Emperor Otho the Great, and St. Adelaide his wife, came there in 965; St. Gerold, Duke of Saxony, in 972; King Charles IV. attended by a crowd of seigneurs and prelates in 1353; the Emperor Sigismond in 1417; Ferdinand III. Emperor of the Romans, in 1442, besides a multitude of princes and nobles of the first houses of Germany, and many ambassadors, representing their respective sovereigns.

King Conrad being at Constance on Christmas-day, after dinner the bishop praised the processions at vespers, which took place during those three days in our abbey, says a monk of St. Gall. " O I wish that I were there!" exclaimed the King, " why should not we go my friends to that abbey to-morrow morning?" Boats were accordingly prepared, and early at daybreak, the King embarked with the Bishop and all his court, and at mid-day reached our shores, and was received with great joy into our monastery, where he remained three nights. It would be long to say with what delight the days and nights were spent, admiring the old men and

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* Hist. Eliensis lib. ii. c. 27. ap. Gale Hist. Brit. tom. i.

† Ap. Leibnitz, ii.

youths in the choir like so many angels. At the procession of children, the King ordered an apple to be thrown on the pavement; and when he saw that not one of the least children was moved so much as to look at it, he wondered at the discipline. On the King saying that he would dine in the refectory and partake of the common fare, the prefect said, " Alas, it is unfortunate that you will not wait till to-morrow, for then perhaps we shall have beans and bread, which we have not to-day." Then the children reading in order, on descending from the desk, the King sent gold to be put into their mouths, and when one boy spat it out, " This one," said he, " if he lives, will be a good monk." Then rising from table, he turned to his men and said, " that he had never before dined with such pleasure." On the morrow he caused himself to be enrolled as a conscript brother, when he gave the price of a vestment to each of the monks, and to the boys he granted three days' play. Then entering the oratory of blessed Othmar, lately canonized by Roman authority, who had been persecuted by his own family, he offered gold and silver on the altar. That day also, he said " he wished to dine with the brethren as a conscript brother," adding, " that he would furnish pepper to season their beans." Never before was there seen or heard such a feast in that refectory. There was the smell of meat, the dance, and the symphony. The King marked the graver brethren, and smiled to see their darkened countenances, as not liking the unaccustomed thing, but through respect for the King they said nothing. On the fourth evening he departed, the brethren thanking him with tears, to whom he promised that he would be a benefactor as long as he lived *.

Eckehard the fourth, in his benedictional says, that when the Empress Gisela, and her husband Conrad II. with their son Henry III. came to St. Gall, and had themselves received as conscript members of the abbey, they begged from the Abbot Dietbald, the book of Job and the Psalter, which Notker Labeo had first translated into German.

The occasion of some royal visits to monasteries, as we have already observed, was the pacification of differences. Thus the monastery of Ranshoven beheld the

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* Eckehard de Casibus S. Galli, c. 1.

solemn interview of Frederic, Duke of Austria, and the Emperor Lewis IV. when by the intervention of the Archbishop of Salzbourg they were reconciled to each other *. The custom of courts gave rise to others; as when the kings of Burgundy, whose capital was Geneva, used to be crowned in the abbey of St. Maurice, in the Válais. Where men had spent their youth as scholars, it was sweet to die; in their sickness, therefore, or when wounded, kings used to be conveyed to the monastery in which they had been educated, or at least to some religious house. Thus we have seen how Louis-le-gros, thinking his end to be near, removed to the abbey of St. Denis, and when he recovered, all the ploughs in the fields round the abbey were deserted, as Suger says, the people flocking together to hail him on his return to Paris, and commending him to God for having so long preserved their peace. When William the Conqueror fell from his horse, having been carried to Rouen, he was removed to the priory of St. Gervais, to be under the care of the Abbot Gouthard, who foresaw from the first that he could not recover. There he died. So again it was in the monastery of Longpont, that Louis, of France, son of King Philippe-le-Hardi, died, the day and hour of whose decease were carefully noted in the diary of the house. But men of all classes in the first shock of calamity, used to turn their eyes towards the cloister, so that the romances of chivalry when they represent the wounded knights desiring to be carried to some abbey in the neighbourhood, are faithful pictures of the manners of the age. Thus when Gyron-le-Courtois lying on the ground near the fountain in the forest, after his combat with another knight, asks "where he can have repose?" his varlet replies to him, "Sir, near here is a house of religion, whither knights often repair, and know that the brethren in it labour very willingly, and do the honours to all strange knights who come to them, and you may remain there at your ease as long as you wish †." History presents many instances of illustrious men of the true heroic stamp,

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* Anon. Chronic. Lud. iv. Imp. ap. Pez. Script. Rer. Aust. tom. ii.

† F. 285.

who expressly repaired to monasteries in order to prepare for death. Thus the great Count Richard, of St. Boniface, whose removal from the world gave such joy to Eccelino, died in the convent of the Dominicans at Bresscia, in which he was buried. Every one has heard of the national legends which predict the return to his country at a future day, of some hero whose memory is still in benediction. Well, even these attest the predominant inclination of the heroic mind; for, if you believe them, it is not in the palace or at the domestic hearth, that he will reappear: it is in some abbey that he will first be discovered. Accordingly when the Portuguese thought that Don Sebastian had actually returned to Portugal, it was a convent of Franciscans that they said he was seen to enter *. Monasteries often received great personages within their gates as visitors, who only sought a religious retreat or momentary refreshment. Ingulphus relates that in the year 1464, in which King Edward IV. was married, Margaret, Duchess of Somerset, widow of Duke John, who was always most favourable and benign to the monastery of Croyland, came there, and was willingly received as a sister into the chapter. In the great Cistercian monastery of du Val Notre Dame, which stood in a deep valley, six leagues north-west of Paris, the King Philippe-de-Valois, came to lodge for some time in the year 1333, and King Charles V. lodged there in 1369 †. It appears from tablets of wax preserved in the abbey of St. Germain-des-Près, that in 1306, King Philippe-le-Bel came to the abbey of Vaux de Sernay, with all his court ‡. This monarch often visited the abbey of Longpont. It is marked on tablets of wax that he was there in September in 1308, and in December in 1304. Almost every year some sovereign was lodged in the abbey of Cluny. Dom Martene was shown in the abbey of Royaumont, the place where the King St. Louis used to sleep in the dormitory of the monks. When King Childebert, with his wife and court, arrived at a short distance from the monastery of Ouches, which he was

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* Hier. Conestaggi de Portug. et Castel. lib. ii.

† Lebœuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, iv.

‡ Id. ix. 168.

about to visit through desire of seeing the blessed Father Evroul, whose reputation had reached his ears, he alighted from his horse and ordered all his company to prepare for appearing worthily before the monks *. We read in old Spanish chronicles, that King Ferdinand coming once to the monastery of St. Facundus, and dining in the refectory, content with the common fare of the monks, and observing all discipline like a brother, there was brought to him a glass vessel, and while receiving it from the abbot's hand it fell to the ground and was broken. The King, lamenting his own negligence, caused to be brought to him a gold vessel adorned with gems, and offered it to the abbot in compensation †. In the monastery of the Holy Cross at Ratisbon, the Emperor used often to dine with his court, when hunting. In the monastery of Montserrat, there were certain chambers set apart for lodging separately, kings, dukes, marquises, counts, and knights ‡. In fact, all high personages used to spend certain intervals within religious houses. The Counts of Champagne, whenever they came to Lagny, always had their lodging in the abbey. Stephen, the most ancient of the Seigneurs de Baubigny, was known in the abbey of St. Denis as a knight and gentleman commensal of the Abbot Suger §. Cosmo de Medicis being received an exile at Venice, with every mark of highest honour, chose for his place of residence the monastery of St. George, where he afterwards erected a superb library, which he enriched with many manuscripts, to express his gratitude for the hospitality used towards him by the friars on that occasion. In the first court of Camaldoli is an inscription, stating how the pious princes of Tuscany had visited that wild wood and sacred cloister, and how their presence had exhilarated the monks. Warriors on their expeditions sometimes demanded hospitality in abbeys. The historian of Ely relates an instance: " One time," he says, " when the venerable Duke Brithnod, of Northumberland, was advancing with a small force against a

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* Ord. Vit. vi.

† Roderic. Toletan. de reb. Hispan. lib. vi. c. 14.

‡ Lucii Marinei Siculi de reb. Hispan. lib. v.

§ Lebœuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, tom. vi. 280.

great army of the Danes, on approaching the abbey of Ramsey, he sent forwards to beg hospitality: but the Abbot Ulsio sent back answer that the place was not sufficient to receive such a multitude, but that he would gladly entertain him and seven companions: to whom the Duke replied, "Let the Lord Abbot know that I do not wish to sup alone without these, because I am not able to fight alone without them;" and so saying he passed on to Ely, sending forwards to tell the Abbot Œlsius, that he and his army meant to sup with him; who returned answer, that "in the work of charity he was afraid of no numbers; but that he rather congratulated him on his coming." So he was received by the monks, and with such love and service, that he ever afterwards had a great affection for the place, testifying his gratitude the next day, by giving to the abbey the manors of Spaldewich, Trumpington, Fulbourn, and many others, and only begging in return, that if he should fall in battle, they would carry his body there to be buried. Then commending himself to the prayers of the brethren, he proceeded on his expedition, in which after fighting courageously for fourteen days, on the fifteenth as he foresaw, he fell, when the Danes cut off his head and carried it away with them. The Abbot of Ely, with some monks, hearing the event, came to the field of battle and having found his body, brought it back to the abbey and buried it with great honour, placing upon it a globe of wax in place of the head. This pious and brave man flourished in the days of King Edgar, and of Edward the Martyr, and he died in the fourteenth year of King Ædelred. His widow Ædelfleda gave several manors to the abbey, and also a veil woven and painted, representing the deeds of her husband, in memory of his worth *.

The record of the visits of great historical characters to the religious houses is indeed very interesting. Let us take for example that which describes the strangers who came to the abbey of Mount Cassino, to which such crowds resorted from the east as well as from the west, either to view the church or to converse with the illustrious Abbot Desiderius, with whom emperors, and kings, and queens corresponded by letters, in which

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* Hist. Eliens. lib. ii.

they commended themselves to his prayers[*]. Hither came the empress Agnes, wife of Henry II., from the farthest limits of Germany, to see him, like another Saba to see another Solomon. Here she remained six months venerating the brethren. Hither came Robert, Count of Lauretello, with his knight, in Lent, for the sake of prayer[†]. Hither came Otho III., Pandulphus of Beneventum, the emperors St. Henry, Conrad II., and Henry III., Richard, Prince of Capua, Robert Guiscard, Duke of Calabria, the Emperor Lothaire, Henry, Duke of Bavaria, and Robert, Prince of Capua, in company with St. Bernard and many Norman magnates[‡]. These visits of kings to monasteries were an occasion to the monks of satisfying their projects, not of ambition, but of humility; as when the venerable Hartmot, Abbot of St. Gall, availed himself of the visit of the emperor to that monastery on his return from Italy, to obtain permission to abdicate and retire from a post of authority[§]. In general the monks sought to convert such visits to the spiritual welfare of their guests, who were always addressed with solemn words of admonition, and conducted in the first instance to the church, that they might adore the blessed sacrament[||]. Whatever might be their state or character, they were invited to adopt the outward forms of the peaceful on entering the monastery. The monks of Mount St. Michael obtained the royal sanction to oblige every one who visited that abbey to lay aside his arms, even to his dagger, at the gate[¶]. In the abbey of St. Gall great men of the world were only admitted into the interior of the cloister on condition of putting on a cowl over their dress. Eckehard IV. saw on Easter day eight counts in cowls going in procession with the monks, following the cross, with youths and old men wherever they went, and dining with them at midday[**]. The conversation of the monks on these occasions, as we shall observe presently, was designed expressly to win their guests to a sense of religion, and so verify the proverbial saying, that no one returned from a holy place the same as he went. A few short words from them, uttered with that tone and look of conviction which so peculiarly belongs to their blessed order, a simple admonition, such as—

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[*] Chronic. Cassinens. lib. iii. 32.

[†] iv.

[‡] Hist. Cassinens. vii.

[§] Ratpert de Origine Monast. S. Galli, cap. x. ap. Goldast. Rer. Al. i.

[||] St. Bonavent. Spec. Novitiorum, ii. 3.

[¶] Raoul Hist. de Mt. St. Michel, 210.

[**] Eckehard in Cas. c. 16.

> " O gentlemen, the time of life is short,
> To spend that shortness basely were too long,"

fell not in vain upon the stranger's ear. "Thou art an adept," he would exclaim, "in the difficult lore of the scholastic wisdom of Greek, perhaps, and Frank philosophy. Thy spirit is present in the past, and sees the course of this old world, and how man can fall and rise. —It is much

> 'I honour thee, and would be what thou art,
> Were I not what I am:—but
> Moreover thou disdainest us, and ours;
> Thou art as God, whom thou contemplatest.'"

"Disdain thee!" would the monk reply, "Not the worm beneath my feet!

> 'The Almighty has care for meaner things
> Than thou canst dream, and has made pride for those
> Who would be what they may not, or would seem
> That which they are not. Stranger! talk no more
> Of thee and me, the future and the past;
> But look on that which cannot change—the One,
> The Unborn and Undying [†].'"

Thus would speak the monk to his strange guest, and his strong words could never pass away; for at each syllable he uttered, it was a new fibre of the other's soul that he laid bare.

We read that a certain nobleman of Old Castille, who for his prodigalities and debauchery was obliged to fly from his home, passing the mountains of the Sierra Morena, found Father John of the Cross, who was then prior of the monastery of Calvary. He disclosed to him his unhappy state, and the holy man made him reflect so well on the happiness of his sufferings, that he was changed into a different man, and lamented nothing but his former impatience. "I speak from experience," said this gentleman, "for though my sorrows were very great, his discourse caused me not only to bear them patiently, but even to rejoice in what I suffered; and I think that I should never have been able to have endured my misfortunes if he had not come to my assistance." "Whatever prejudices a stranger might have against monks," says Bourgoing, "he would renounce them after a visit to the Hieronymites of the Escurial: he would be convinced that under that habit the Spaniard clothes much true goodness. There he is received with hospitality, loaded with kindness, and, if inclined to letters, all the treasures of the library are at his disposal *." Some guests were so charmed that we find them remaining several years in monasteries. Thus in 1197 Albertus is found dwelling in the monastery of St. Andrew, in Mantua, with the understanding that he should neither offer himself, nor wear the monastic habit, nor profess obedience to the abbot, but should have free liberty to go to whatever regular or irregular place he might choose with all his books, and without asking the abbot's permission, according to mutual contract made between him and the abbot. There were also residing there Daniottus and Bogajolus, and others, like Albert, not bound to the house †. So in the annals of Corby in Saxony we read, "This year, 937, C. de Peyna, long a haunter of castles, and a brave knight, for the rest of his soul, chose his habitation, his wife being dead, in our monastery, and though not made a monk, he yet lived devoutly according to our rule and order." Nevertheless these visits became often a source of great abuse, of which the directors of the cloister complained. St. Bernard writing to Hugo, a novice, who became afterwards an abbot, says, "As much as you can, my son, avoid the conversations of guests, which, while they fill the ear, empty the mind ‡." Men who came through curiosity to listen with learned rather than religious ears were not such welcome visitors §. St. Stephen, on being elected abbot of Cîteaux, applying himself with great zeal to preserve that fervent community in the spirit of poverty and seclusion, among other precautions provided against the visits of strangers. This shocked the Duke of Bur-

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[†] Shelley.

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* Tableau de l'Espagne, i. 238.

† Annal. Camaldulensium, lib. xxxv.

‡ Epist. 322.

§ Sul. Sever. Dialog. iii. 1.

gundy, who was in the habit of holding his court in the abbey, and in consequence he withdrew the alms which had been its only support. The holy abbot however persevered with courage, and was at length abundantly consoled by the arrival of St. Bernard and his companions. In Italy the visits of the rich became so unreasonable and troublesome, that an abbot writing to Peter of Blois expresses his intention of abdicating his office in consequence. "Quid de hospitalitate dicam, quæ merito hostilitas potius quam hospitalitas censeretur * ?" Peter of Blois, however, in reply, advised him to think no more about abdicating, but to put a stop to abuses, and to observe moderation. The rule of Fontevrauld says, "If the king or queen, the dauphin, or other royal princes or founders should desire to enter the monastery and no entreaties can dissuade them, let them enter, but with as few attendants as possible: but let them not attempt to pass the night within, if they wish to avoid the sentence of excommunication †." The old kings of France being used to hold their court at St. Denis, where they had a palace, at the four solemn festivals of the year, King Robert promised the monks that henceforth neither he nor his successors would celebrate the great festivals there, in order not to disturb the service of the monks, who used to be troubled by the presence of their courts. It appears also from a charter of Henry III., Count of Champagne, in 1271, that Count Thibaud, one of his predecessors, had given up the right of gîte in the abbey of Lagny, in order to please the monks, who paid him in return the annual sum of one hundred livres ‡.

Examples, moreover, were not wanting of the visits of great men to monasteries with an intention of ungratefully requiting their hospitality by plundering them. Herluin, chancellor of the duke of Normandy, and Raoul de Traci, came to Ouches, and received hospitality in the convent of the confessor St. Evroul. "In their simplicity," says Orderic Vitalis, "the monks, overjoyed at the arrival of such great personages, rendered to them all manner of duties. They led them familiarly into their chapels, and oratories, and private chambers, and showed them the

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* Epist. 102.

† La Reigle de Fontes. c. vi.

‡ Lebœuf, xv. 71.

shrines and relics of the saints, which were till then preserved in secret. These lords viewed apparently with respect the sacred objects, and withdrew after making their presents and prayers; but soon after, as the Chaldæans in Jerusalem, they returned with a troop of brigands, and cruelly carried off the vases, books, relics, and all the precious objects of the church of God *." Christiern II., king of Denmark, was received to hospitality with all kindness into the monastery of Nydalens, called Newvale, on the day of the Purification. He took occasion to seize the abbot, with seven monks, after they had said mass, and tying their hands behind their backs he caused them to be flung into the river; and when the abbot by natural strength succeeded in breaking the cords and in gaining the shore, he was slain by the king's satellites †. What Cicero said of a whole province, that "if the Romans wished to maintain utility in war and dignity in peace, it should be defended not only from calamity but even from the fear of calamity ‡," being generally admitted as a principle to guide all nations in regard to every separate religious house, it followed that monasteries, during times of war, received numbers of fugitives who sought an asylum. Not to speak of the numerous population attracted permanently by the peace which reigned round them, many towns and even cities owing their origin to their neighbourhood, we must, therefore, make mention here of the guests who came to them for a time to escape the desolations of war. The site of monasteries was often a protection. On the invasion of the Danes in 1013, the abbeys of Croyland, Thorney, and Ely, owed their preservation to the heavy rains which had laid the country round under water. Orderic Vitalis says of Thorney, "There is a convent of monks, separated from all secular habitation, built in honour of St. Mary, which is celebrated for the purity of worship which God receives there. The venerable Adelwold, bishop of Winchester, built this house in the time of king Edelred, after the massacre by the Danes, in which the blessed Edmund suffered martyrdom. He transferred to it the body of St. Botulf, abbot of Ichenton. In this obscure asylum the monks were in safety

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* Lib. vi.

† Olai Magni Septent. Hist. lib. viii. c. 18.

‡ Pro lege Manilia.

while combating faithfully for God *." Under the Carlovingians, the abbeys being fortified, there was danger of kings converting them into royal palaces for their permanent abode; but when the abbeys were pillaged by the Normans, while cities were able to resist them successfully, kings found that they were more secure in the latter, and thenceforth their only constant inhabitants were the monks or the dead, as at St. Denis. Against ordinary wars, however, the monasteries proved, in most instances, a secure asylum.

During the dreadful insurrection of the north, in the reign of Henry VI., the monk of Croyland describes the alarm of the monks in that monastery hearing of the devastations committed so near them, and because the country people had brought all their treasures with them to Croyland to be in greater security, which made it a more likely prey to the invaders. The precious vessels, with the charters and monuments, were, therefore, all carefully hidden within walls. Processions issued daily from the convent, and every night, after matins and lauds, prayers and tears used to be poured out round the tomb of the most holy father Guthlac, the patron of Croyland. A watch was set also at every gate of the town, and no one was allowed either to enter or depart without leave. The adjacent ways were obstructed by great trees thrown across them in many places. Blessed be God we were not given a prey to our enemies, for that savage army passed on after having been within six miles of us. On one occasion the convent of hermits in the desert of Camaldoli ran a still greater risk; for on the passage of a certain army we read that it was resolved to send a detachment to plunder it, because a quantity of corn and utensils had been sent there for safety by the people of Cesena through fear of the army. Some of the hermits in terror were preparing to fly over the high rocks of the mountains; but one of them, Petrus Teutonicus, of most holy life, exhorted them to remain, and make a solemn supplication, proceeding two by two, with the cross preceding them, when, lo! such a dense and frigid darkness came over the desert that the day was turned into black night, so that the soldiers who had begun to enter the forest fell into confusion and into

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* Lib. xi.

the utmost horror; and it was not without great difficulty that they returned to the camp [*]. In 1406, when John, Duke of Burgundy, governed the country of the Morins, the English having made a sally from Calais, invaded the frontiers of Artois, and on the eve of St. Martin ravaged the suburbs of St. Omer, made prisoners the richest inhabitants, and finally rushed into the Dominican convent to pillage it; but the superior, who was a prudent man, went to meet them, and succeeded so well with his prayers that he moved the hearts of the soldiers, so that they abstained from every disorder. The superior then received them graciously into the house, gave them to eat and drink; and two hogsheads of wine, which Count John had lately sent them, were given to them to make merry on the feast of St. Martin. Four days after, to testify their gratitude, they sent back to the convent twelve gold nobles called of the rose, which was equivalent to 131 francs; and, moreover, for the sake of the good monk, spared the village of Bosselart, which they had resolved to burn to ashes [†].

During the middle ages many such scenes occurred that might have reminded one of Ulysses giving wine to the Cyclops—

Κύκλωψ, τῆ, πίε οἶνον, ἐπεὶ φάγες ἀνδρόμεα κρέα·

Take compassion on us and rage not so madly,

οὐ δὲ μαίνεαι οὐκέτ' ἀνεκτῶς.

Thus did barbarous soldiers receive and drink the monks' wine, and rejoice greatly, drinking it, and call upon them for more, saying, "Our land indeed produces wine, but this is an emanation of Ambrosia and Nectar [‡]." The convent of St. Catherine, near Diessenhofen, on the Rhine, had a narrow escape in 1460, when the army of Sigismund of Austria having been defeated in battle there, some of the soldiers, who fled into that house, proposed to set fire to it. A pious soldier, shocked at the design, threw himself on his knees before a crucifix, and after a short prayer, turning to the warriors, spoke to them with such effect that they desisted from what they had begun; then, after great exertion, he succeeded in stopping the flames. This soldier was Nicholas, who subsequently became the hermit so celebrated under the appellation of Von der Fluë; and the crucifix before which he prayed may be seen to this day in that convent *. Thus some pious soul was always near, some impression of awe was sure to be awakened in the most hostile breasts, so that many elements then conspired to preserve the peace of monasteries. While the world was agitated with a thousand disorders in consequence of the decomposition of the empire of Charlemagne, the abbey of Corby is described by one who inhabited it as a place like that Paradise from which man was ejected by the envy of the serpent; such was the peace, and order, and angelic tone of the society †.

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[*] Annal. Camaldul. lib. lxvi.

[†] Piers. Hist. des Flamands des Haut. Pont. et de Lyzel, 97.

[‡] ix. 350.

> "O who with speech of war and woes
> Would wish to break the soft repose
> Of such a tranquil scene?"

Yet such speech did penetrate even into the enclosures of religious men; and in one of their old chronicles there is an anecdote related which presents in a very beautiful and striking manner the contrast to which this gave rise. "A dreadful contention raged between King Theodoric and Theodebert, both swelling proudly against each other with the strength of the nations. At this time the man of God, St. Columban, with St. Magnus and others, had been received by Theodebert on their retreat from Luxeuil. Arriving on the shores of the lake of Constance, they built a cell in an ancient destroyed place called Arbona, and there awaited the result of this contest. Soon the great battle was fought near the castle of Tolbiac, in which innumerable men of both armies fell. Theodebert being conquered fled. Now it came to pass at the same hour in which the battle was fighting, that the man of God, Columban, was sitting in the forest on the trunk of a decayed tree reading a book, over which he fell asleep; and while sleeping he saw what passed between the two kings. Awaking, he called Magnus, his disciple, and told him that a bloody battle of kings

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* Weissenbach Leben des Nikol, &c. 26.

† Vita S. Adalhardi ap. Mab. Acta S. Ord. Bened. sæc. iv. 1.

was just taking place, and that much human blood was shedding. Magnus then answered and said, 'Lord Father, I was lying under a pine-tree, oppressed with sleep, and it seemed to me also as if a battle was fought; and taking a staff I wished to strike Theodoric and deliver Theodebert, but a certain form forbad me, saying, It is not necessary for you to do so, since the Lord will soon avenge thy master Columban. Then awaking, I rose and hastened to declare to you this vision.' While both of them wondered at these things, Eunochus standing by, said rashly, 'My father, you ought to afford the suffrage of your prayers to Theodebert, that he may vanquish the common enemy Theodoric;' to whom blessed Columban said, 'You give a foolish counsel, and one alien from religion; for such cannot be the will of the Lord, who has commanded us to pray for our enemies*.'" How impressive is this scene! this contrast between the delights of the peace of God and the bitterness of human misery! How calm the forest, where, from branch to branch, the feathered quiristers apply their wonted art, with full joy welcoming these hours of prime, and so, unconscious of any evil, as if the universe were thrilled with love, warble still amid the leaves that to their jocund lays keep tenor! What peace too in the hearts of these monks sitting so thoughtfully as if entranced by the sweetness of their song! And then how sad to think that all the while the work of cursed hate should be so near! for hark! at long intervals, with each return of the slowly undulating air, there comes a harsh demoniac sound, deep and terrible, for which nature has no echo. It is the noise of the crimson seething plain, made up of the cry of blood, and the fierce taunt of an immortal rage, and the shrieks of scornful and unyielding wretched men hurling defiance as they die.

Tidings of war penetrated into cloisters whenever any monk arrived who had been obliged to make a journey during its continuance. To the perils which such men encountered Lupus alludes in writing to the Abbot Marcwad, saying, "We commend this novice, our runner, to your sanctity, answering in every respect to his profession, excepting that, I believe, on account of nocturnal fears he cannot sleep alone *." In war-time monks who returned from a journey had no want of adventures to relate. Rodulph, of the Benedictine abbey of St. Tron, about the year 1000, was chosen by the other monks as a proper person to bear a message from them to the Bishop of Metz respecting the unjust usurpation of Herriman, a service of some danger, as the roads were beset with hostile armies. "However, regarding," he says, "more the utility of the church than my own life, I set out; but in order not to take the public road, I joined myself to the army of Godefrey, Duke of Lorraine, and Frederic, Bishop of Cologne, which was advancing, as I supposed, to Verdun. Good Jesus! what did I not endure in that journey! or who could relate it! And what was I to do, a monk, and having only one attendant? If I directed my steps to a town, either the town had been already destroyed by the army, or, if it existed, I knew there was no security in it: but if I were to remain in the open fields between the armies, I had no means of contriving a roof or shelter for myself or my horses. I knew not where to procure food for myself or for them; nor did I dare to separate myself from my companion. At length, committing myself to God and to our blessed patron, leaving the army, I passed on to a little village which was half burnt down, and there was not one man left in it; but I found some women there who had fled through fear of the army; and seeing me, a monk, advance to them, they rushed to meet me, contending with each other as to which of them should give me hospitality for the night, that by my presence they might be defended from the rapine of the armed men. When I had turned into one house, immediately all the women with their boys and children that had been left in the village came crying and groaning to my hospice, dragging with them their pigs, and their cocks and hens, and all their animals; and they brought to me and my companion oat-bread and cheese, and milk for provisions, and also hay and oats for our horses: but returning, thanks to God, I took nothing from them gratis, and we lost nothing during the night. Early the next morning the army moved on, and so the good women preserved all their stock. After many hardships we

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* Vita S. Magni, lib. i. c. 5. ap. Goldast. tom. i. P. ii.

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* Lupi Epist. lxx.

reached Verdun on the tenth day; and the Bishop of Metz was in the neighbourhood at a place called Dongeus: so there I delivered my letters. The reply of the Bishop was favourable to us; but as there was danger lest, on my return, I might fall into the hands of Herriman, a letter was also directed to him in which the words were so modified as to admit of a double signification. Having received these letters, and the kiss of peace from the Bishop, I prepared to return; but I hardly knew by what way, for I knew that Herriman had an ambush ready to intercept me. However, I passed by the castle of Brie, and took up my lodging for the night with the religious canons of the monastery of St. Peter, who had a house in the forest. Early next morning they gave me a guide, and I proceeded to the castle of Cuns, where was a cell of the brethren of the monastery of St. Hubert, and with them I passed the night. On the third day I came to the monastery of St. Hubert through a long way, and a vast and most horrible solitude. On the fourth day, being guided by a certain clerk who feared captivity no less than myself, we rode on, I know not through what passes of lofty mountains and rocky heights, and then through deep and marshy valleys, to the great exhaustion of our horses and our own anxiety, turning our ears on every side to the least sound lest we should be taken; till, at length, at dawn on the fifth day, we found ourselves at the end of that terrible desert, and the clerk pursued one way and I another. The monks of Cluny have a cell in the woods between Huye and Liege, and there I was received for the night with all humanity. On the sixth day we came to Liege, where the most pious abbot of St. James, Dom Stephen, entertained and consoled me, but warned me that Herriman had his scouts on the look out for me. I took a bold step, for I repaired to the wife of Count Gislebert, which count was joined with Herriman, and showing her the ambiguous letter, I had her permission to proceed, and no one dared to contradict her: and so monastic simplicity deluded the cunning of the woman. On arriving at our convent the brethren were astonished, and sat themselves down round me with great joy, and gazed on me as if I had returned from the tomb: and they gave thanks to God for my wonderful escape. But after a time, when the countess discovered how she had been deluded, she kindled the rage of her husband against me to such a degree that I was not safe even within the walls of our cloister; and so, fearing constantly for my life, I secretly made arrangements with Count Arnulf of Louvain that he should conduct me away in safety. He led me out on the fourth of the calends of September, very sad on leaving a place so long familiar to me, and the young men in whose education I had taken such pains, and a congregation in which I had so long laboured, and which I was never likely to see again. I wept, therefore, bitterly, and so proceeded to St. Laurence, to be under the wise abbot Berenger, where, thanks to his great humanity, I was fixed and consoled by the third week of September *."

But to return to the abbey and observe the fugitives who came to it for hospitality. When Ingulphus came first to Croyland as abbot, he found there sixty-two monks, of whom four were lay brothers, besides monks of other monasteries, who were in community with the chapter of that house, and who whenever they came sat in the choir and in the refectory, and slept in the dormitory, and there would stay as long as they liked: and sometimes not till half a year or a whole year would they return to their own monasteries; for particularly in time of war or disturbance they flocked to Croyland. On this occasion there were in the house ten monks from Thorney, six from Bury, eight from Ramsey, three from Ely, nine from St. Edmunds, twelve from St. Alban's, ten from Westminster, two from St. Andrew of Northampton, fourteen from Christ Church, Norwich, fifteen from Thetford, seven from Coventry, six from St. Mary's, without York, ten from St. Mary's of Stow, six from Michelneys, and five from Malmsbury, besides daily comers and others who always lived there for the sake of security, and had obtained leave to be united with the society; for the urbanity of Croyland was such that no one was ever sent away." In much later times, when the Swede was carrying on war against the Catholics of Germany, the monks of the abbey of Einsiedelin gave hospitality at one time to three abbots and to more than thirty monks from other monasteries, who had

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* Chronic. Abbatiæ S. Trudonis, lib. vii. ap. Dacher. Spicileg. vii.

taken refuge there*. The Count of Stolberg, in his history of Alfred, after observing that "in times of war and desolation illustrious sufferers found a sure refuge in the holy asylum of a monastery," adds, "this explains why so many princes, when restored to their thrones, showed such gratitude to them. In the day of adversity they had found there protection against their enemies, consolations in misfortune, and wise lessons; leisure to reflect upon the disorders of their past life, and new strength to resolve upon reforming it†." "The tempest of civil war," says Ingulphus, "was now hanging over the kingdom: but in order to escape a little from it during Lent, King Henry VI. came to the abbey of Croyland for the sake of devotion, to make his offerings humbly at the tomb of our holy Father Guthlac. When he had tranquilly remained for three days and three nights, being much delighted with the observances of religion, he earnestly sought to be admitted into the fraternity of our monastery, and he obtained it. Soon after, in order to show his gratitude, he published a decree exempting all the inhabitants of the town of Croyland for ever from the tax-gatherers and ministers of the king." But to return to the more ordinary times of general tranquillity.

We have observed how the hospitality of the monks was often abused; but there were visitors of a different class from those we have hitherto seen, whose arrival at monasteries was an occasion of unmingled joy to their holy inhabitants, and whose presence disturbed not the tranquillity of the house of peace. Hearken to their first words:—

"We enter from this time to prove
Thy hospitality and love,
Shown toward thy meanest guest:
From land to land we would not stray;
For whither should we go away?
With thee is perfect rest‡."

These are the pilgrims who used so often to come from distant countries and remain to die. Such was St. Malachi, who, as St. Bernard says, journeyed from his far distant country, the farthest Scotland, unto Clairvaux, where he died *. Such was Möngal, another Irishman, who made a pilgrimage to Rome, in company with his uncle Markus, a distinguished monk, and many of his countrymen. On their return over the Rhetian Alps they all took the way to St. Gall, in order to see the place where the holy Gall and so many Irishmen after him had lived and were still living. Möngal and Markus being pressed by the monks to remain, consented, and gave their horses and money, books and vestments to the abbey. Möngal, under the name of Marcellus, diminutive from his uncle Mark, was made teacher of the inner school, in which he formed many eminent men †. These Irish, in the ninth century, "quibus consuetudo peregrinandi jam pæne in naturam conversa est," as Walafrid Strabo says, in his life of St. Gall ‡, were welcome visitors to the different religious houses which they visited; and many of them never returned to their country, but remained in Italy, France, and Germany, where they became monks or hermits. In a codex of St. Gall are these lines alluding to them—

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* Regnier Chronique d'Einsidlen, 78.

† Chap. iii.

‡ Trench.

"Hi sunt insignes sancti, quos insula nostra
Nobilis indigenas nutrivit Hibernia claros,
Quorum grata fides, virtus, honor, inclita vita
Has aulas, summasque domos sacravit amœnas.
Semina qui vitæ Anglorum sparsere per agros,
Ex quis maturos convertis in horrea fructus,
Nos igitur fratres, una de stirpe creati
Hic sumus; imbecilles, miseros quos mente superba
Despicitis; proceres, mundique tumentia membra!
Cum Christi potius debetis membra videri,
Prudens hic pausat quin Gallus atque sepultus,
Ardens ignis Scotorum conscendit ad altos.
Dubslane meruit nomen, dignumque vocari.
Aunue rex Cœli me hic pro nomine Fælan,
Dubduin hos hortos fecit, quicunque requiris,
Versibus labrisque canens, qui dixit amice §."

Sometimes, however, these holy guests only remained for a season. Thus in the annals of Corby in Saxony

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* Ireland used to be called Scotia Major. Martyrol. B. Notker. Pet. Lombard de Hibernia Commentarius, 34.

† Eckehard in Cas.

‡ Lib. ii. c. 47.

§ Ex Cod. Sæc. x. n. 10.

we read, "This year, 1423, Nicholas, one of the hermits of the monastery of St. Gall, came to us, and was made a reader; he returned to Switzerland, and became, we hear, an abbot." We lately observed how many personages of dignity in the world visited the abbey of Mount Cassino. Let us hear its annalist record the arrival of other guests, whose chief greatness consisted in their saintly fame. Hither, then, came St. Adalbert, Bishop of the Sclavonians, having left his see by permission of the Roman Pontiff, through desire of making a pilgrimage to Jerusalem; but the abbot and prior, as if by divine admonition, dissuaded him, saying, "It is the part of a magnanimous man to avoid the perplexities of this fugitive world, sed quotidie loca nova mutare minus laudabile est. For as the inconstancy of the wintry sea is an evil to navigation, so a wandering from place to place threatens danger. To stand in one spot, and the more freely to apply to supernal things, not we, but the precepts of our ancestors and the examples of the bravest men exhort you." Moved by these words, he resolved to renounce that project, and to proceed no farther, but to conclude there the remainder of his days; though by command of the Pope he afterwards returned to the Pagan people, from whom he received the martyr's crown *. Hither also came, for the sake of prayer, St. Romuald and St. Boniface, and many others of the Teutonic race: hither came Count Olibanus, by advice of St. Romuald renouncing the world, and along with him bringing fifteen horses laden with treasure, ostensibly coming to pray for a season, but in fixed resolve to remain here for ever †. Hither came the Lord Odilo, of venerable fame, from Cluny: through reverence for St. Benedict, he ascended the mountain on foot, and when, after the custom of the monastery, he had been introduced into the chapter-room, and led honourably to the abbot and brethren, after the solemn words used on the reception of such a guest, he said aloud, "Sicut audivimus ita et vidimus in civitate Domini virtutum, in civitate Dei nostri, et in Monte Sancto ejus ‡."

Hither came very devoutly Hugo, the venerable abbot of Cluny, a man of celebrated life, desiring to be received

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* Cap. xvii. lib. ii.

† Id. cap. xix. lib. ii.

‡ Cap. liii. lib. ii.

with his congregation into community of prayers in life and death with the brethren *. Hither came St. Villibald from England, which he had left ten years before, on a pilgrimage to Jerusalem.

The joy with which the monks must have welcomed the arrival of such men could only have been equalled by that of the guests themselves on entering their gates. When we find St. Thomas Aquinas seized with sickness, which appears to be mortal, at the castle of Magenza, the seat of the Count Annibal of Cecan,—at which he had stopped on his way from Naples to the council of Lyons, in order to bid adieu to his niece Frances of Aquin,—and afterwards proceeding on his journey, though inwardly persuaded that his last hour was at hand, how consoled are we to hear of his arriving at Fossa Nuovo, that famous abbey of the Cistercians, in a desert in the diocese of Terracina! In fact he had hastened his departure from the castle, saying, "If the Lord pleaseth to give me a little strength, I shall proceed, in order that I may be found in some monastery, rather than in a secular house." On entering the abbey, after first praying before the blessed sacrament according to his custom, he passed into the cloister, which he never lived to go out of, repeating these words, "Hæc requies mea in sæculum sæculi." The monks were not insensible to the honour conferred on them by the arrival of such a guest. He was lodged in the abbot's apartment; and the monks would cut down and carry with their own hands the wood that was to burn in his room, thinking themselves happy if they could render any service to the holy doctor, who, as yet living, was hastening to a kingdom. They entreated him to dictate discourses on the Cantica Canticorum; but he replied, "Give me the spirit of St. Bernard, and I will comply with your request." There he died on the seventh of March, 1274, some hours after midnight, just at the dawn of day.

A scene of the same kind was witnessed in the monastery of Faventia, at Ravenna, in the year 1072, at midnight, on the octave of St. Peter's chair, when St. Peter Damian, that great star of sanctity and learning, set upon the world, closing in that house his legation with his life †. Trithemius relates another deeply interesting visit

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* iii. 51.

† Annal. Camald. lib. xix.

made to a religious house. St. Anselm, archbishop of Canterbury, hearing of the blessed Abbot William and the sanctity of the monks at Hirschau, turned out of his way when on his return from Rome and visited them, remaining with them fourteen days,—a man holy with the holy, a monk with monks, and an humble archbishop with the humble. St. William rejoiced to see the primate of England, whom he had so often heard spoken of as a man of God. In the midst of the brethren the holy archbishop remained like one of their number, speaking many things on the Holy Scriptures, on the observance of the monastic conversation, on the salvation of souls, and on the love of God. Often he lamented aloud his own cares, that he was drawn from a cloister to an episcopal chair; he was compelled, he said, to converse with the world. "O happy, and thrice happy, those," he cried, "who could serve God in monastic peace and solitude!" Then commending himself to the prayers of all, and giving them his benediction, he departed on his return to England, whence he came, but he never lost the memory of this visit *. Bishops, indeed, were generally glad to pay such visits, which conferred pleasure on the monks. Thus, in the annals of Corby in Saxony, we read, "This year, 875, Luithebart, the bishop, on his journey, passed a night in our monastery, and was benignly received by Adelgarius and the whole convent." And in the records of Einsiedelin, the arrival of St. Charles Borromeo, in 1576, is noted down.

Great men in exile, and mere secular wanderers too, arrived often at the monasteries, and received hospitality during a certain space of time. In 1380, Peter II., abbot of Einsiedelin, obtained from the Emperor Winceslas a confirmation of the privilege which conferred on his abbey "the right to receive banished persons." In all ages, the Benedictines desired this "droit d'accueillir les bannis," to which they owed many illustrious visitors. The well-known compassion of all the religious orders drew many strangers to their houses: for those who could sympathise so deeply with woes they only read about, as may be witnessed in the impassioned exclamations of the poor Friar Martinus, on hearing of the sufferings of St. Elizabeth, would not be frigid comforters

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* Chronic. Hirsaug.

in presence of the unhappy. The abbey of Blandinberg, near Ghent, acquired fresh celebrity from having received, in his banishment, St. Dunstan, Archbishop of Canterbury. In the abbey of Clairmarais, St. Thomas, of the same see, found an asylum; and, when lodged again in the abbey of St. Bertin at St. Omer, he remembered with pleasure that the same house had received the learned Alcuin, the great Kings Alfred and Canute, and that resplendent light of England—St. Dunstan. St. Thomas, on his way thither, having reposed for a night in Lille, the house in which he lodged still bears this inscription: "Sancto Thomæ Canturbiensi hujus ædis quondam hospiti sit laus, honor, et gloria;" and the water of its well is asked for by the peasants, with faith in Him whose martyr drank it. The abbey of Pontigny, that second daughter of Cîteaux, served as an asylum to three holy archbishops of Canterbury; St. Thomas, Stephen Langton, and St. Edmund. Many were the victims of oppression who found refuge in this house, and hence we find there this inscription:—

> "Est Pontiniacus pons exulis, hortus, asylum;
> His graditur, spatiatur in hoc, requiescit in illo *."

Another class of pacific visitors whose presence was hailed with an immense and holy joy was that of men intellectually great; whose genius, that cast glory on their age, was not without enthusiastic admirers under the monastic cowl. Never did such high intelligences give each other rendezvous in the palace of princes, as used to meet here. For whom now sounds the porter's bell?—there are quick steps in the cloister; the abbot smiles, to indicate the joy that will accompany the coming guest.—It is Michael Angelo who arrives!—it is Dante! or a prince philosopher perhaps, a Picus of Mirandula; or the Songster of Jerusalem, the sweetest of the poets,—Tasso! When the ponderous gates of the abbey flew open to receive such men, there were that day many glad hearts within it, though plaudits were not heard to wound its sanctity. Where did Dante find that friendly solitude which invited him, as he says, to visit ancient books †?

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* Gall. Christ. xii. 440.

† De Vulgari Eloquentia.

Where did the great Buonarotti hold that silent and meditative intercourse with eternal truth? It was in some monastery among woods and mountains, to which they used to repair from time to time, seeking renovation of their spirits and peace. Learned renowned monks of distant abbeys were also welcome visitors to religious houses. Thus, in the records of Einsiedelin, the arrival of Dom Mabillon, in 1683, is noted down; as also that of Dom Calmet, in 1748.

No one being rejected, even the mere secular wanderers, like those of latter times, came to abbeys, and were received into them as guests. The Songster of Newstead himself, when at Athens, in the city of Minerva, in presence of the Parthenon, chose for his lodging the convent of Capuchins *. Count Elzear de Sabran—whose name alone brings one back to the ages of faith and heroic virtue—has left, in the tablets of Vallombrosa and Camaldoli, a memorial of the peace that he derived from inhaling the sanctity of those cloisters; and certainly, most strangely perverted must be the mind which does not regard the memory of a visit to the monasteries of Switzerland and Italy as one of its most delightful recollections. What, in fact, is more calculated to make a deep and lasting impression than the solemn music of the monks, chanting by night in the church of Vallombrosa? What more exhilarating than that new life one seems to breathe in those delicious scenes sanctified by religion, when, after escaping in the summer months from Florence to the mountains, one treads those swelling lawns, when yet the tender dew strives with the sun, or takes shelter at noon within the dark primeval forests that screen that abbey? Who can forget the tolling of the matin bell at Camaldoli, so awful amidst the solitude of those Appennines! or the salutation, each day before the dawn had chased the hour of prime, by the monk entering in his long white habit, carrying his lamp, and saying with a smile, "Deo gratias!" Ah! one cannot wonder that poets of old chose to accept the hospitalities of religious men, rather than to court the invitations of the great. In Dryburg Abbey resided often the moral Gower, and the philosophic Strode. In the convent of the Car-

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* Michaud, Correspond. de l'Orient.

melites, on that hill where Cato had his farm, and where highest God in tender mercy now shows miracles, Vida wrote his Christiad. In the Carthusian monastery, one league from Milan, Petrarch, who had a country villa near it, spent his happiest hours. "In that cloister," he says, "I enjoy at all hours of the day the pure and delightful pleasures of religion; the gates are always open to me; but I am resolved not to lodge there, lest I should give trouble to others in seeking my own pleasure. In this happy retreat I draw consolation from my pious monks. Their conversation is not brilliant, but it is innocent and holy; their repasts are not inviting, but in their company there is perfect freedom; while their prayers will be my great comfort, both in life and at my death."

Finally, for it would be endless to proceed with instances, to the monastery of St. Onufrio Tasso came, in his last hours, when he felt that he was never to leave it more. Seized with mortal sickness, at the moment when the triumph of the laurel-crown was to have been conferred upon him, he caused himself to be removed to this monastery, where all his thoughts were fixed on God. On the arrival of Cardinal Cinthio with the pope's benediction, he exclaimed, "This is the crown with which I hope to be crowned, not as a poet in the Capitol, but as a child of the Church in heaven."

So here, in conclusion, we discern that not in vain were made these visits to the monasteries of the middle ages, where men found that for which their hearts perhaps so long had yearned,—edification and peace. "Alas! but you astonish me," exclaims the youth who receives a stranger coming as a suppliant to the temple in the ancient tragedy, "that your eyes should overflow with tears, thus moistening your gentle cheeks on beholding the chaste oracle of Apollo; all others, as soon as they see the vaults of the god, are filled with joy,—and you must weep!" "It is not strange that I should weep," was the reply, "for I applied my thoughts to an ancient remembrance: my mind was at my home, and not here." The suppliant, who came devoutly to the sanctuaries of Christian peace, could not so easily stand aloof to cherish the remembrance of even the dearest things domestic: his tears were only of repentance or of ecstasy.

"'How much,' say'd he, 'more happie is the state
In which ye, father, here doe dwell at ease,
Leading a life so free and fortunate,
From all the tempests of these worldly seas,
Which tosse the rest in daungerous disease;
Where warres, and wreckes, and wicked enmitie,
Doe them afflict,—which no man can appease *.'"

Such were the impressions of Petrarch when he visited the Carthusian monastery of Montrieux, and found there his brother Gerard become a perfect anchorite, disengaged from every thing upon earth, consummate in piety, and longing for the joys of heaven. "I blushed," he says, "to behold a younger brother, and my inferior, now risen so far above me. At the same time, what a subject of joy and glory to have now such a brother!"

George Vasari, in a letter to Giovanni Pollastro, describes his own affliction, amounting almost to madness, on the death of Duke Alexander, and the consolation he derived from a visit to Camaldoli. "I verily believe that had I persevered long in the same course, it would have brought me to an untimely end. But it was by you, my dear Master Giovanni,—blessed be God for it a thousand times!—it was by your means that I was conducted to the hermits of Camaldoli; and it was impossible for me to have been conducted to a fitter place to bring me to my proper senses, because I passed my time in a way that did me infinite service: for, by communing with these holy hermits, they, in the space of two days, worked such an alteration in my mind for my good and my health, that I began to be sensible of my former folly, and the madness with which I had been blinded. But now, it is in this chain of lofty mountains of the Appennines, beautified by the straight fir-trees, that I am made to feel the high value of a life of peace. Here these holy hermits have their abode together, leaving the vain world below them, with a fervent spirit elevated to God. I have seen and conversed for an hour with five old hermits, neither of them under eighty years of age, and who are strengthened to perfection by the Lord; and it seemed to me as if I had heard the discourse of five angels of Paradise." Then, after a pause, returning to his pagan images, he says, "If there had been a Camaldoli, Lysander would have

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* Spenser, vi. 9.

been enabled to get rid of that deep melancholy which preyed upon his strong mind during his latter years."

And now, having observed the guests in all their variety of character, what are we to think of these monastic receptions? As a French historian takes occasion to demand, in alluding to that papal court which derived its brightest luminaries from the cloister, Where will you find a house in modern times where the Church, the Christian monarchy, Theology, Philosophy, History, Poetry, Painting, and Music, send thus, day after day, their representatives? Where even the human soul, as if already passionless and escaped from all its fleshly bonds, comes to substitute the substance for the hope; and to enjoy, in present reality, what is of faith.—the communion of saints?

But we must leave it to the chronicles of the middle age to describe the guests of this last and highest order, who came to monasteries to salute the sons of peace within them, and receive from that sweet interchange of holy looks, a profound and mystic consolation. "When the king St. Louis," says one of these, "was at Rome on his pilgrimage, having heard the renown of brother Giles, who was then residing at Perugia, he took the road to that city in order to see him. Being arrived at the convent of the Friar Minors, without being recognized, travelling as a pilgrim, he begged the porter to permit him to speak to brother Giles. The brother who had charge of the gate invited him to wait, and proceeded to look for Giles, who had a sudden revelation that it was the king of France, and under this impression he descended, and threw himself on his knees at the feet of the holy king, while the king, in like manner, knelt before Giles, and having kissed and embraced each other with many signs of mutual charity, they separated in silence, without either of them uttering a word. While these two devout souls were thus united in spiritual content, the porter asked one of the strangers who was that pilgrim that had embraced brother Giles with so much familiarity, and he answered, that it was Louis, King of France, who was come for the purpose of seeing the good father, being on a visit to the holy places of Rome. The friars, hearing of the circumstance, were displeased at the little ceremony with which brother Giles had received this great king, and expressed their surprise that he should have committed such a fault. 'My brethren,' replied Giles, 'be not troubled at what has happened. The king is content with me, as I am with him; and be not astonished that we have not exchanged a word with each other, for our discourse was mute; and know that while we embraced, the divine light revealed to each of us the interior of the other's heart: and having fixed the eyes of our souls upon that eternal brightness in which all things are beheld clearer than in themselves, we have spoken to one another, although we used no words.' The friars remained astonished and confused at this reply, beating their breasts for having so rashly judged an action so holy."

To enjoy this mute discourse, this ineffable communion of inspired hearts, this participation of eternal brightness, this supernatural, divine contentment, the visitors to monasteries often avowedly came. For hear a memorable example. One day a pilgrim entered the abbey of Corvo, and stood in silence before the monks. After some time, one of them demanded what he wished and what he sought there? The stranger, without answering, contemplated the arcades and the columns of the cloister. The monk asked him again what he desired, and what he was seeking? Then he slowly turned his head, and looking upon the monk and his brethren, replied, "Peace." Struck with the word, his tone, and manner, the monk took him aside, and after a few words, understood that it was Dante who stood before him. Then he, drawing a book from his breast, gave it to him graciously, and said, "Brother, here is a part of my work, with which perhaps you are not acquainted. I leave you this remembrance." "I took the book," adds the monk, "and after pressing it to my heart, opened it in his presence with great love, expressing, however, my surprise that he should have written in the vulgar tongue. In reply, he adduced many things, full of a sublime passion, in praise of the people, and to the disparagement of the nobles of our time." What seekest thou, stranger? Peace.

In the next chapter we shall see how many others came with the same object, and how divinely their best wishes were fulfilled.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Whence come ye, friends?" The poet fancies what the monk beheld. Alas! "I cannot name all that I read of sorrow, toil, and shame on your worn faces; as in legends old, which make immortal the disastrous fame of conquerors and imposters, the discord of your hearts I in your looks behold. Whence come ye? From pouring human blood forth on the earth? Speak! Are your hands in slaughter's sanguine hue stained freshly? Speak then! Whence come ye?" A youth made reply,

"Wearily, wearily, o'er the boundless deep
We sail. Thou readest well the misery
Told in these faded eyes; but much doth sleep
Within, which there the poor heart loves to keep,
Or dare not write on the dishonoured brow.
Even from our childhood have we learned to steep
The bread of slavery in the tears of woe,
And never dreamed of hope or refuge until now *."

Such words spake the convertites when first they reached the portals which received them to religious peace. Such were their recollections of the world they were leaving, and such their experience on catching the first glimpses of a better. The change, though so complete, was often already consummated when they first came, for it was the previous conversion of their hearts to God which had made them resolve to assume the cowl of Benedict, or to gird themselves with the cord of St. Francis. Their voices therefore, as we are led towards them, may be the echo of that chorus of spirits of which the same poet so beautifully sings,

"Changed is our mind,
Which was late so dusk, and obscure, and blind:
Now 'tis an ocean
Of clear emotion,
A heaven of serene and mighty motion.

"Years after years,
Through blood and tears,
And a thick hell of hatreds, and hopes, and fears,

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* Shelley.

We waded and flew,
And the islets were few
Where the bud-blighted flowers of happiness grew.

"Our feet now, every palm,
Are sandall'd with calm,
And the dew of our wings is a rain of balm;
And, beyond our eyes,
The human love lies
Which makes all it gazes on Paradise."

In the beginning of this book we observed that there were men among the lost and found again for whom it was necessary that there should be places, as St. Bernard says, fit and delectable, not for rejoicing, as in the world, but for mourning the things committed in the world, where by much subtle and useful preaching of the seniors, and by much more subtle and useful examination of their conversation men might be instructed to all good *, in other words, that there are persons who must cloister them in some religious house, where holy lives must win a new world's crown, which their profane hours here have stricken down. The change of mind implied in this necessity, constituting the conversions which we are now about to consider, though deemed unintelligible by the blind world, remains a psychological fact, the existence of which, history places beyond all doubt or question. Could one read the hearts, known only to God, of men during the last moments that precede their death, during that twilight of life when nature makes a pause, and they lie passive and voiceless, with thoughts beyond the reaches of their souls, one would find that sooner or later the need of such mighty renovations became known to most of Adam's sinful children. But long before that hour, it has been disclosed to thousands, to men who as the poet says, in all their enjoyment

"Have this trick of melancholy,"

and who say from the bottom of their hearts, "in omnibus requiem quæsivi, et in omnibus dolorem et laborem inveni. Non est requies nisi in hereditate sanctorum." O melancholy! who ever yet could sound

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* Epist. 418.

thy bottom! Oh God! Oh God! how bitter is the state of man unreconciled, unsanctified! Hearken to his cries, "woe is me—whence are we, and why are we? of what scene the actors or spectators?—evening must usher night, night urge the morrow,—month follow month with woe, and year wake year to sorrow." St. Bernard heard cries like these. "I have known men," he says, "satiated with this world, and to such a degree as to nauseate its memory. I have known them satiated with money, satiated with honours, satiated with pleasures, satiated with curiosities, and not moderately, but even to the utmost stretch of loathing satiated [*]." Nevertheless, the difficulty opposed to conversion might remain the same as before, for adversity and prosperity seem to present an equal obstacle to it. Therefore St. Augustin says, "for me, when I reflect on the conduct of the lovers of the world, I know not at what time preaching can be employed most seasonably to heal their mind: for when events are favourable to them, one sees them drunken with fortune; and the insolence of their pride makes them reject as fables, the remonstrances and sayings of holy men. If adversity press them, wholly occupied with what afflicts them, they think more of delivering themselves from the evil which they feel, than of taking measures against that which menaces them. The Israelites, oppressed by Pharaoh's officers, refused to pay attention to what Moses had to say to them from God. "They would not hear him," say the Scriptures, "on account of their extreme affliction, and the excess of the labour with which they were loaded." "Non acquieverunt ei, propter angustiam spiritus, et opus durissimum." A holy pope therefore said: "that it was a greater miracle to convert a sinner, than to restore a dead man to life." "He who hath not experienced the enmity of the furies," says the Greek poet and philosopher, "knows not whence are the wounds of life." The ancients thought that all unhappy men had their attending fury. The true wisdom, *πανακὴς πάντων φάρμακον ἡ σοφία*, as it was styled by one, who, alas! knew it not, with the substitution of a word, accepts the same idea, suggests the need of discovering some spot like that promised by Minerva, *πάσης* ἀπήμον' ὀϊζύος *, the need of taking some courageous irrevocable step, which may secure for ever the soul from such demoniac persecution, and concludes her address to him, who feels the power of calamity in words like those which Dante heard, when admitted to behold the suffering spirits. "Oh! this is so strange a thing, it is a great sign that God doth love thee." There are men who correspond to these first sounds of her voice, and say

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[*] De Conversione, 14.

> "Some great thing is to be endured or done:
> When I know what, I shall be still and calm,
> And never any thing will move me more."

Then begin those terrible struggles between the demon and divine grace in human breasts, which the chronicles of the ages of faith so awfully describe. Then there is a counter-voice, which says,

> "Thine own soul is changed to a foul fiend
> Through misery——
> This fiend, whose ghastly presence ever
> Beside thee like thy shadow hangs,
> Dream not to chase;—the mad endeavour
> Would scourge thee to severer pangs.
> Be as thou art. Thy settled fate
> Dark as it is, all change would aggravate."

Thus is he for a while turned back to thoughts which can delight no more, to books whose power is dead. Vainly would his winter borrow sunny leaves from any bough. He is discouraged at the immensity of the change required. "Sunt enim omnia ista ex errorum orta radicibus," as the philosopher says, "quæ evellenda et extrahenda penitus, non circumcidenda nec amputanda sunt †," and "truly it is a great labour," as Richard of St. Victor observes, "to desert accustomed things, to leave below long familiarized thoughts, and to ascend to things celestial ‡." One might describe what the converts suffered, in the very language of Plato, where he says, that "the soul when its wings begin to grow, suffers in the same manner as the gums are affected with pain when the teeth first project §," and

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* Æsch. Eum. 893.

† Tuscul. iv. 26.

‡ De Contemplatione, l. lib. ii. c. 13.

§ Phædrus.

illustrate it from that curious passage in which Plutarch speaks of the difficulty and disgust which is experienced at the commencement, by men who engage in philosophy before they have experience of its joys. During this middle interval, he says that they suffer much, and that many fall back in consequence. Thus Sextius, a Roman, having abandoned the honours and offices of Rome for the love of philosophy, and soon after finding difficulties and torments in his studies, was going to throw himself headlong into the sea: he relates a similar thing of Diogenes, the Sinopien, when he began to give himself to philosophy. It was on a day of festive rejoicing with the Athenians; the theatres were opened, assemblies were held, dances and masquerades occupied the whole night, while he in a corner of the place, shut up as if to sleep, began to give way to a thousand imaginations, which greatly weakened his heart, suggesting to him that he was going to throw himself voluntarily into a laborious, strange, and savage mode of life, being separated from the rest of the world and deprived of all good. With these thoughts present to him, he espied a little mouse that came to gnaw the crumbs that had fallen from his great loaf, and this gave him fresh courage, and he said to himself, "What sayest thou? Diogenes, behold a creature that still lives, and makes a feast upon thy leavings, whilst thou, coward as thou art, lamentest that thou art not drunken and surfeited like these men, satiated with luxury and delicacies*." Thus St. Ephrem represents the demon entering into conversation with the Christian soul, and saying "What! always refuse yourself such and such enjoyment! How long will you torment yourself with these desires! and the Christian resisting his suggestions by considerations drawn from the goodness of God, the shortness of human life, and the importance of eternal salvation †. Difficulty is still in the way, and of greater magnitude, so that in a spiritual sense was verified the remark of a modern philosopher, "we have tears in this world before we have smiles, Francesco! We have struggles before we have composure; we have strife and complaints before we have submission and gratitude." For as Hugo of St. Victor says, "there is this difference between the love of the world, and the love of God, that the former seems sweet in the beginning, but proves bitter in the end, while the latter begins from bitterness, but has sweetness for its end*." Discouragement, therefore, in the first stages of the new life ensues. The combat seems to slacken, but it is only because every power that fashions and upholds, works silently. Consideration, like an angel comes, and as the poet says,

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* "How to perceive one's Prog."

† Orat. 1.

> " Whips out the offending Adam."

Then his resolutions become fixed to feed his eyes no more on vanity.

> " O let me not," quoth he, " then turne againe
> Backe to the world, whose joyes so fruitlesse are,
> But let me here for aie in peace remaine."

In fine, his wish becomes that which is so beautifully expressed by Shirley,

> " There is a sun ten times more glorious
> Than that which rises in the east, attracts me
> To feed upon his sweet beams, and become
> A bird of Paradise, a religious man,
> To rise from earth, and no more to turn back
> But for a burial." ——

Some may be offended on hearing of his choice, but all his true friends answer,

> —— " O let him pass! he hates him
> That would upon the rack of this tough world
> Stretch him out longer."

It would be difficult in this frigid atmosphere which now encompasses us, to conceive the meek and holy joy which the recital of such conversions excited in ages of faith: " Gloria in excelsis Deo," exclaims St. Anselm, when he hears that his ancient friend Rodulf has become a monk, " glory be to God in the highest, who gives a good will to men on earth, 'qui in terra dat hominibus bonam voluntatem;' whose right hand hath changed according to my desire, the will of my beloved friend from the vanity of the world, which profits no one, but injures all who love it to truth which never injures any one, but which profits all who seek it[*].”

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* De Arca Morali, lib. i. 1.

Of the successive scenes of this great drama within human breasts, it is not for my pen to trace even a faint outline. What was the discourse which worked such miracles, can be learnt best perhaps hereafter, when we come to converse with the monks. Expressly suited sometimes to the professed enemies of peace, their words resembled those of Spenser.

> “ Henceforth the suitt of earthly conquest shoune
> And wash thy hands from guilt of bloody field :
> For blood can nought but sin, and wars but sorrow
> yield[†].”

Their exhortations, however, to embrace a monastic life, are chiefly founded upon the great truths, the appreciation of which moves men to a sense of religion in general, as when with St. Jerome they say, “ if you had the wisdom of Solomon, the beauty of Absalom, the strength of Samson, the wealth of Crœsus, the power of Augustus, what would it all avail you, when your flesh would be consigned to worms, and your soul to demons?” As when they tell men to address themselves in the words of Peter de Roya, who says, “ O Peter, the things in which you delight are of the world. There will be a time when they will not be, but you will be[‡].” And as when they entreat them to conclude with St. Augustin, ‘ terrena calcare, cœlestia sitire.’ Which do you wish, they ask with him another time, to love temporal things, and to pass with them, or to love Christ, and with him to live for ever?” But can I not love him in the world? some will say, to whom the monk replies as the spirit did to Dante, heaving forth a deep and audible sigh, “ brother the world is blind, and thou in truth com’st from it[§].” “ It is true,” as Richard of St. Victor says, “ that in the sterile and arid desert of the world, the devout soul, while it labours for true joy, can fructify this barren soil, and bring forth even there something that will remain[||].” But esteem not yourself to be of such perfection that you can associate with those who keep in the broad, while you walk in the narrow way."

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[*] Epist. 11. 10.
[†] i. 10.
[‡] S. Bern. Epist. 441.
[§] Purg. xvi.
[||] In Cantic. Cant.

Then turning to depict the vanity of the former, they appeal to the calamities of life, and say to the sufferer, "thou most beauteous inn, why should hard-favour'd grief be lodged in thee? Et nunc quid tibi vis in via Ægypti, ut bibas aquam turbidam? et quid tibi cum via Assyriorum, ut bibas aquam fluminis?" If it were ever so delightful, as St. Bernard says, "the world passes, et relinquere magis expedit quam relinqui." Of the rapid and imperceptible flight of time, even poets of the world, they add, remind you, when like Guillaume de Lorris, the Ennius of France, they remark, how, in a moment, three times are already past,

"Le tems que s'en va nuit et jour
Sans repos prendre et sans séjour:"

which made the Gentile say,

τὰ θνητὰ δ' οὐ νῦν πρῶτον ἡγοῦμαι σκιὰν,
οὐδ' ἂν τρέσας εἴποιμι τοὺς σοφοὺς βροτῶν
δοκοῦντας εἶναι, καὶ μεριμνητὰς λόγων,
τούτους μεγίστην μωρίαν ὀφλισκάνειν *.

"The world is called a desert," says Richard of St. Victor, "either because it is deserted and despised, or because it deserts and fails in itself. For daily with time pass the joys of time, and as many joys of days as days pass away and fail. The world, therefore, is always losing joy, and consequently the soul perfectly despiseth such fleeting joy, and endeavours to ascend by the desert to true and eternal joy †."

They conclude with moving exhortations such as these of St. Jerome, "my friend, what is it that still retains you in the world? You, whose fine soul is not made for the world, how long will you bury yourself in these perishing habitations? How long will you remain prisoner in these cities, the worthy abodes of human vanity? Trust me, come and join your friend." Come after me, and to their babblings leave the crowd. "Ah, be persuaded by me," says Petrus Cellensis, "to leave the world of sorrow. The tumult will never cease until we be cast upon the shore like foam. Let thy mercy, O Lord, be upon us! What avails the ambition of honour, the delight of the flesh, the visitings of friends and relations, the offerings of subjects? Is not the soul chained down by these, so that it cannot fly away and find celestial bliss? We must either conquer these, or be conquered by them. O human heart, why do you fear? why do you fly? There is nothing hard or bitter here, but a little bark and surface. The substance is sweetness and peace. O human heart, why fear to be called back? Why tremble to be repaired? You are willing and unwilling. O heart! wanting fervour, why do you not hasten to the Lord of hearts? Why do you collect all things but yourself *. After all, however, as St. Bernard says, "the conversion of souls was the work not of a human, but of a divine voice, for the hearing which no labour was necessary; since the labour wanting was rather to deafen the ears, that they might not hear it †."

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* Eurip. Medea, 1223.

† In Cantica Cant.

Goerres has devoted one portion of his great work to a treatise on the call of men in the middle ages to a monastic life, of which we shall presently relate instances. I shall take care not to involve myself in the mysterious depths of this subject, by inquiring how this call was made, and whether the result was spontaneous,—the fruit of that consideration to which the poet ascribes the expulsion of what offends, or, involuntary, the consequence of those peculiar graces which St. Augustin says God gives, without being excited by any previous disposition on our part. In either case, that Angel whose name expresses curse of God, and he who, according to St. Thomas, is the breath of the spirit of the Saviour which is to kill Anti-Christ, contributed to the work, assisted doubtless by those who dissipate the darkness of spirits, who have received from God the charge of guarding men, who have joy on the conversion of sinners, who led Lot from the midst of the reprobate, and who hereafter will make the final separation between the just and the unjust. The visible causes which led men to enter monasteries were many and various. As Cæsar of Heisterbach observes, "Conversion sometimes pre-

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* Lib. 2. Epist. 12.

† De Conversione, l. 2.

cedes and sometimes follows contrition [*]." "For some," he adds, "are led from the first by the sole vocation of God, of whom Petrus Sutorus, the Carthusian, says—

"Sunt qui blanditiis, sunt qui terrore vocantur:
Et tamen hos omnes spiritus unus agit.
Blanditiis Simon, flammis et fulgore Paulus,
Qui fuit ex acri fulmine pulsus equo [†]."

Whereas many who end well begin through an unworthy motive; for "others," says Cæsarius, "enter monasteries by the instinct of the malignant spirit, as those who come to steal, or to entice away some brother. Some are moved by a certain levity of mind; many by the ministry of others, that is, by the word of exhortation, the virtue of prayer, and the force of example. Necessity draws innumerable; as for instance, sickness, when men recover after a vow; poverty, when they seek a retreat; captivity, shame at others' faults, danger, fear, the prospect of doom hereafter, or the desire of the celestial country," all which he illustrates by examples [‡]. Then as to the form of conversion: "Some," he says, "come with pomp and troops of friends, others alone with humility. A knight named Walevanus came to Hemmerode, entered the cloister on horseback, armed cap-a-pie, and, as our seniors, who were present, related to me, going up through the middle of the choir, in presence of all the wondering brethren, offered himself before the altar, placed his arms upon it, and then demanded the habit. Afterwards, through humility, he became a lay brother. Abbot Philip of Otterburg, on the contrary, being of noble parents, chose a different mode, as a canon of Utrecht who was present told me. Being converted at Paris during his studies, he left the school secretly, and being handsomely dressed, as became a youth of his condition, he changed clothes with a poor scholar whom he met on the way. On arriving at the abbey of Bonavallis, he applied for admission, but the brethren seeing his worn cap and old clothes, esteemed him one of the wandering scholars, and were very near rejecting him [§]." Many clerks who come to monasteries follow this latter mode, and pretend through humility to be laics, and ask permission to tend the flocks [*].

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[*] Illust. Mir. lib. ii. 1.

[†] De Vita Carthus. ii. iii. 7.

[‡] Illust. Mir. lib. i. 5.

[§] Id. i. c. 38.

Certainly put what construction one will upon the motives, it is a wonderful page in the history of mankind which records the conversions of men to a monastic state during the ages of faith. Let us in the first place only observe who were the men. To such a question Valentio, a Benedictine monk, is represented answering thus:—

> "To fashion my reply to your demand
> Is not to boast, though I proclaim the honours
> Of our profession: Four emperors,
> Forty-six kings, and one and fifty queens,
> Have changed their royal ermines for our sables;
> These cowls have clothed the heads of fourteen hundred
> And six kings' sons; of dukes, great marquises,
> And earls, two thousand and above four hundred
> Have turned their princely coronets into
> An humble coronet of hair, left by
> The razor thus———— [†]."

"Dimisit comam capitis," says an ancient author of one who underwent this transformation, "et invenit coronam gloriæ; reliquit vestimenta sæcularia, et suscepit stolam candidam; reliquit pompam hujus mundi, et indutus est loricam fidei." In the middle ages therefore it surprised no one on visiting a monastery to find a king among the hooded heads. In the abbey of St. Medard at Soissons, the kings Eude and Raoul were abbots. In a cloister of Armagh in the eighth century might be found Flaithhertach, an Irish king, who after a prosperous and peaceful reign of seven years, abdicated the crown, and spent the remainder of his life in monastic seclusion. In the monastery of Iona might be found his successor Nial II., brother of Hugh Allan IV., who in 734, after a happy reign of similar duration, retired to the same religious peace. Many Irish abbeys beheld examples of this kind; and soon after the conversion of England, the Anglo-Saxon history mentions the names of more than thirty persons of both sexes, who left their thrones to consecrate themselves to God, in the solitude of a cloister. Whatever may have been the circumstances of their time to facilitate such a measure, it cannot be denied," says the Count of Stolberg, "but that such a resolution in persons of that rank proves a deep sentiment of the vanity of greatness and terrestrial pleasure,—a serious meditation on what is visible and on what is invisible, on what is perishable and on what is eternal [*]." In the abbey of Mount Cassino might have been found St. Carloman, eldest son of Charles Martel, and the uncle of Charlemagne, to whom by his father's testament had fallen Austria, Suabia, and Thuringia, all which he resigned to his son Drogo; in the height of prosperity bidding adieu to the world in 785, resigning his dignity, leaving the guardianship of his children to Pepin, and retiring first to the monastery on Mount Soracte, where, being too much regarded on account of his contempt of royal majesty, he feared vain glory. So he fled thence by night with one companion, and repaired to this abbey. He applied at the gate in the usual manner, asking to speak with the abbot, and offering himself as a poor Frank, who sought to do penance for homicide. As such he was received, and here he remained long unknown [†], becoming the king of obedience and humility; so that he was appointed to tend a few sheep, which he used to lead forth to pasture and back again, having on one occasion to defend them from robbers. Here he died in odour of sanctity [‡]. In the same monastery might be found Rachiz, King of the Langobards. After sparing Perugia at the prayer of Pope Zacharias, he was converted by him at Rome to a religious life, with his wife Tasia, and his daughter Rattruda. Here he became a monk; and there is a vineyard which he planted near the monastery, that is called after him to this day [§]. To the abbey of Prum came the Emperor Lothaire, son of Louis-le-debonnaire, where, after making the world tremble by his arms, he made the sacrifice of himself to God, by taking the habit; and in that house he died, where Dom Martene saw his tomb in the middle of the choir. What an impressive comment on the same lesson is furnished by a walk under the Doge's Palace at Venice, from which so many of those great princes passed to the tranquillity of a cloister. Of the great Urseolus we shall soon speak more fully; but besides him, observe how many took the same road to peace. Ursus Badoarius II. created in 912, a most holy duke, after twenty years' reign, put on the monastic habit in the monastery of St. Felix in Amiano, where he died in odour of sanctity. Vitalis Candianus, created in 978, put on the monastic habit. Tribunus Memius, created in 979, became a Benedictine monk. Otho Urseolus, created in 1009, fled into Greece, where he wished to become a monk. Olius Malipetrus, created in 1179, the conqueror of Ptolomaide, who vanquished Saladin, after fourteen years of glorious dominion became a monk. Petro Ziani, created in 1205, after twenty-two years of glory, exchanged the ducal dignity for the habit of St. Benedict*. Such names alone impose silence; but what would be the impression if we had before us their portraits, like that by Bellini of the Doge Leonard Loredano, whose eye of fire piercing from a bony orbit, does not overcome the expression of an imperturbable religious calm? Let us hear the monastic chroniclers. "In this monastery of Villiers," says its historian, "were many convertites, noble men, who came there to perfect their conversion. There were here, Gobert, Count of Asperimont, Henry de Birbac, William de Donglebiert, and Oliver, of the noble house of Sombreffe. There were also here many famous knights, who having renounced the temporal for the celestial chivalry, now clothed their limbs in the monastic habit. Franc d'Exkenna, chatelain of Montigni, the Lord of Bohenem, the lords Gerard de Greis, Henry de Brein, John de Salench, John de Roist, and Walter de Riklam. These four last knights assumed the habit of convertites. Theobald, Chatellain de Courtray, and lately a bold knight, became a monk, and at the same time another renounced son of chivalry, Franc de Lachem, a convertite †." "This year, 871," says another, "Eccericus from a knight is made our brother and obedient son, formerly a wild man, ferus homo." Such is the notice of his conversion in the annals of Corby in Saxony ‡. The origin of the foundation of Hulne Abbey in Northumberland, the first of Carmelite friars in these kingdoms, presents another instance; for among the British barons who went to the holy war in the reign of king Henry III. were William de Vesey, Lord of Alnwick, and Richard Gray, who on visiting Mount Carmel, unexpectedly found there among the monks a countryman of their own, Ralph Fresborn, from Northumberland, who had distinguished himself in a former crusade, and who was then professed in that solitude. When Vesey and Gray returned to England, they importuned the superior of the Carmelites to let their countryman accompany them home, which was granted upon condition that they would found a monastery for Carmelites in their own country. Soon after their return, Fresborn, mindful of his engagement, began to look out for a place, and after examining all the circumjacent solitudes, he at length fixed upon this spot, induced, it is said, by the resemblance which the adjoining hill bore to Mount Carmél.

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[*] Id. i. 39.

[†] Shirley, The Grateful Servant.

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[*] Life of Alfred, chap. iii.

[†] Annalista Saxo ap. Eccard. Corp. Hist. Med. Ævi, i.

[‡] Chronic. S. Mon. Casin. c. vii.

[§] Id. c. 8.

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* Thesaurus Antiq. It. tom. v.

† Hist. Monast. Villariens. lib. ii. Prolog. ap. Martene, Thes. Anec. iii.

‡ Ap. Leibnitz, Script. Bruns. ii.

Thus among hooded men the red-crossed knight and once gay champion in the tilted ground might be seen walking under the vaulted cloister, appearing, perhaps, to those who had before known him, like de Wilton to Clara, on the battlements of Tantallon Castle, of whom the poet says—

> "Wilton himself before her stood!
> It might have seemed his passing ghost,
> For every youthful grace was lost."

"Adam, a monk of Lucka, told me," says Cæsar of Heisterbach, "that there was in Saxony a knight of the name of Alardus, a man of such prowess, that in his first tournament, when made a knight, he acquired with his own hand fourteen horses. As a prudent man, ascribing the temporal honour not to his own strength, but to God, he restored them all, and bidding adieu to his companions and the world, took the habit in the monastery of Lucka*." In the abbey of Bousolas in Tuscany could be found brother Arsene de Janson, who before becoming a Cistercian monk had been the count of Rosemberg, a famous knight, who fought at the siege of Vienna, at the capture of Buda, and at the great battle of Barcan, where Sobieski defeated the Ottoman army. So again, Herman, Count of Zärungen, son of Bertold I., renounced his power and all his worldly splendour, and wandered in a pilgrim's habit to the monastery of Cluny, to pray and serve God. He lived there undiscovered and in great humility; as the chronicle says, "he was made keeper of the swine of the convent, for the love of Christ; and until his death remained unknown, tending the swine *." Burchard, Count of Corbeil, educated at the court of Hugues Capet, and the intimate friend of king Robert, after a life of military fame, retired to the monastery of St. Pierre-des-fossés, where he took the habit, and used to perform the office of an Acolythe †. Similarly, Robert Mowbray, Earl of Northumberland, once a most valiant knight, a man of high spirit and immense possessions, came in the end to be a shorn monk in the abbey of St. Alban, where he lay buried, on the north side of the sacristy, having died in the year 1106. In the convent of St. Evroul at Ouches, as we learn from William of Jumiège, might be found Robert de Grandmenil, who having studied letters in his youth, and afterwards interrupted his studies during five years, while squire to the Duke of Normandy, by whom he was then knighted and loaded with immense presents, was moved by the Spirit of God to disdain all things and become a monk in this abbey, which he had rebuilt ‡. In the monastery of Corby was a young man of twenty years, employed in labouring in the garden. This humble novice, standing among the beds with the hoe in his hand, has lately been seen among the first nobles in the palace of the emperor Lewis ; for this is Adalhard, who has been moved to renounce the world in disgust, by observing the injustice of the emperor in putting away his wife, through dislike of her father Desiderius §. In the abbey of Einsiedelin in the ninth century might be seen St. Gerold, Duke of Saxony, who had left all things to become a monk there, and his two sons, who had followed his example, and who remained there till their death. In the abbey of Préaux, as Oderic Vitalis re-

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* Illust. Mir. xi. c. 19.

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* Chron. Hirsaug. 1082.

† Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, xi. 164.

‡ Lib. vii. 23.

§ Vita S. Adalhardi Mab. Act. S. Ord. Ben. iv.

lates, might be found Roger de Beaumont, a wise and modest nobleman, who had always been faithful to the dukes of Normandy, and who bowed his head under the monastic yoke in this convent, which his father Onfroi de Vieilles had founded on his own estate*.

Helinand, whose verses on death were so celebrated, was a nobleman, remarkable for his beauty, and skill in all chivalrous accomplishments. He became a monk at Frigid Mont, and paints himself, in writing to Walter, in these words: "Lo! he is made a spectacle to angels and to men, who before was a spectacle of levity: for no scene, no circus, no theatre, no amphitheatre, no forum, no gymnasium, no arena, resounded without him. You have known the man Helinand,—if indeed a man,—for he seemed not so much a man born to labour, as a bird born to flying; running round and perambulating the earth, seeking whom he might devour, either by adulation or defiance. Lo! in a cloister is now enclosed the man to whom the world seemed not only like a cloister, but even a prison. No one would believe that he could be converted at the age of fifty. Yet such was the example he gave the world†."

In the abbey of Croyland, at one time, was seen an abbot who was a man of royal blood, and who had inherited from his father sixty manors and vast riches. This was Turketel, who had renounced all the pleasures of the world for the divine worship, and who became a monk there, as Orderic Vitalis relates‡.

In this monastery of Hirschau, says Trithemius, there were many who before entering religion had been of great name and ample dignity in the world, of lofty blood and great riches; and there were others who had sprung from rustic and poor parents. Yet the utmost love bound them all together in charity. All followed one mode of living: the gentle were not preferred to the servile convertite; nor could blood usurp any place of honour among monks, but only virtue; for, whether servant or free, all were one in Christ Jesus. Such was the attraction of sanctity here, that glorious dukes, counts, and sons of nobles, despising all that they possessed, came here to keep company with the poor of Christ, and conformed themselves, in all humility, to the one pattern, as if they had been before sons of beggars *.

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* Lib. viii.

† Bulæus, Hist. Universit. Paris, tom. ii.

‡ Lib. iv.

The chronicle of the abbey of Monte Sereno, after relating many passages in the secular life of the prince of the country, in these words makes mention of his end: "In 1156, this Conrad, marquis of Misnia, by divine grace, considering the uncertainty of his life, and fearing lest he should fall with a falling world if he remained in it, resolved to leave it, and so assumed the regular habit, embracing poverty for the love of Christ; whose devotion and aspect extorted tears from all the princes who were present to witness such a change in such a man."

When we hear the circumstances of conversions we shall meet with many more remarkable instances. At present I shall only observe, that the mendicant orders which arose in the thirteenth century, in like manner received into them many high and potent lords, who preferred to their grandeur in the world the cord which now girded them. How many illustrious nobles and princes of Italy became minor friars! Wadding distinguishes among them William and Barnabas, nephews of the Marquis of Malespina; Bonaventura, Count of Monte Dolio; Simon de Battifolio, Count of Puppio; Boniface, son of Count Raynerius da Depnonaco, of Pisa; Bandino, Count of Santa Flora; Albertuccio, Count of Mangona; Tondellino, Count of Gangalanda; Lewis, son of Count Bandino da Monte Granello: and then he says, "If so many nobles entered this order from Tuscany alone, what numbers must not have come to embrace it from the other provinces of Italy, as also from Spain, France, and Germany †!" The number of noble youths converted by the preaching of St. Francis alone, and who became his companions, renders vain all attempt at a general enumeration. Blessed Dionysius, the Carthusian, remarks the same fact generally in respect to all orders in his time, and says, "Do you not see how many elegant, learned, rich, and noble youths every day desert the world, and all that they possess, in order to enter a monastery, and remain in it for ever ‡?"

But why, it may be asked, have we been so careful to observe the rank and worldly condition of these conver-

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* Chronic. Hirs.

† Ann. Min. tom. v.

‡ B. Dion. Carthus. de Convers. Peccat. lib. vii.

tites who came seeking peace? We shall remain longer perhaps surveying the return of others; but the monks themselves did not disdain to notice the nobility of the great men who joined them. "God, indeed," says St. Bernard, "is not an acceptor of persons; nevertheless, virtue in a nobleman—I know not how—pleases more: is it perchance that it is more conspicuous? True it is, that a person not noble, wanting glory, cannot so easily make it appear whether it be because he is unwilling to have it, or whether he is unable. I praise a virtue of necessity, but still more that which freedom chooses than that which necessity requires [*]." In withdrawing kings from secular pomp, and knights from the warfare of the world, God seemed to triumph more gloriously, casting down such chivalry into the sea of contrition and penitence. In fact, converts of this kind were often the most perfect; as was remarked by Hugo of St. Victor, for he says, "It is detestable that the poor should be delicate where the rich is laborious and abstemious; which yet we often find to be the case: for many, in proportion as they were more noble and delicate in the world, live in the monastery so much the more in an abject and strict manner; and many, in proportion as they were more abject and poor, so much the more seek they to be exalted and delicate in the monastery [†]." The Monk of Cluny cites a memorable instance, for he says, "We have seen Hugo, formerly Duke of Burgundy, and afterwards standard-bearer in the spiritual warfare; who used to grease the shoes of the brethren, and so to humble himself that the lowest persons used to be amazed to see such a prince beneath their feet [‡]." Tacitus says that the habit of ambition is the last garment that the sage throws off; and Pericles went farther still, for he said that the love of honour never grew old—*Τὸ γὰρ φιλότιμον ἀγήρων μόνον.* "That passion," he says, "is always young; and in the extremity of old age it is not gain, as some say, which delights men, but the being honoured [§]." What, then, would have been the astonishment of these great thinkers of antiquity if they could have seen the Duke of Burgundy with the Cluniac monks? For, let it be remembered, when such men withdrew to cloisters from the stormy scene of a discordant world, it was not with the mind of Achilles, who, though removed from the battle, still longed for it—Ποθέεσκε δ' αὐτήν τε Πτόλεμόν τε *. The convertites were not, as the moderns suppose, always ready at a word to reassume their former exercises; as easily excited as Ulysses, who, on being taunted by Euryolus, declares that he will engage in the games, adding,—

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[*] Epist. cxiii.

[†] Institut. Monasticæ.

[‡] Bibliothèque Clun. 459.

[§] Thucyd. ii. 44.

θυμοδακὴς γὰρ μῦθος· ἐπώτρυνας δέ με εἰπών.

All whose enthusiasm returns in an instant:—

δεῦρ' ἄγε, πειρηθήτω· ἐπεί μ' ἐχολώσατε λίην,
ἦ πὺξ ἠὲ πάλη ἦ καὶ ποσίν †.

"I am no unworthy combatant when it is a trial of strength; I know well how to bend the bow; I am the first to strike, aiming the arrow against the crowd, though there be many others at my side who can direct them well; and I affirm that among the present generation I have no equal." The convertite, wrapped up in his sable weeds, had no disguise to throw off thus, no desire lurking in his heart such as the Homeric hero proclaimed with so much emphasis, that he might be once more what he was before he wore the cowl, when he stormed cities with harness on his back ‡. Alluding to his changed condition, he would not have said with a sigh, like him described in the Last Minstrel's Lay, "I was not always a man of woe!" That he was not always holy and pacific as he had then become, was the source of his lamentations: the feeling with which he looked back upon his former years was not that expressed by Octavian de Saint-Gelais in the stanzas which conclude,—

"Adieu, maisons nobles et les beaulx lieulx,
Où j'ay passé ma première jouvence,
Quant je vivois en mondaine plaisance."

But it was rather that described by Dante, when he says,—

"And as a man, with difficult short breath,
Forespent with toiling, 'scap'd from sea to shore,
Turns to the perilous wide waste, and stands
At gaze; e'en so my spirit, that yet fail'd,
Struggling with terror, turn'd to view the straits
That none hath pass'd and liv'd §."

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* Il. ii. † viii. ‡ xxiv. § Hell. i.

Baptist of Faensa, the celebrated convertite, who, from being a ferocious soldier, became a Capuchin, on one occasion going out to beg alms in Faensa, and carrying a wooden cross in his bosom, according to his custom, a certain young nobleman began to accuse him for so doing as a hypocrite; to whom Baptist meekly answered, "Why do you censure me so severely? If I carried so many years in my bosom the weapons of the demon, with which I perpetrated so many crimes, why do you condemn me for now, though late, carrying in it the image of Christ*?" The historian of the abbey of Villiers dwells on another instance in point. "The pious Gobert," he says, "proposed in his heart to forsake the sterile warfare for God; and not a second time after this did he look back with the eyes of his mind or of his flesh. Thus was this man converted,—once so powerful in all virtue according to the world, most noble in the antiquity of his race, robust in body, tremendous in aspect, terrible in word, a famous count. Thus did he withdraw himself from the embraces of the world, and deserve to approach to the way of true and perfect safety. And in this beginning of his conversion the Illuminator of all nations so enlightened his heart, that he regarded with the utmost contempt that excellence of the most illustrious nobility which had been transmitted to him by blood; so that, despising all that was lofty, like a poor stranger he took refuge in this abode of the poor of Christ. This man, elect of God, weighing and estimating worldly warfare and all the glory of the world to be but as dust before the face of the wind, learned to despise all that was of the world, as if it had been written in his heart what St. Augustin says, 'Mundus clamat Deficiam, diabolus clamat Destruam, caro clamat Tradam, Deus clamat Reficiam.' Therefore, as he had exercised secular warfare, so now he began to embrace the spiritual warfare; that as with delight he had militated for the world, so now with devotion he might militate for God. Being desirous of associating himself with monks of the Cistercian order, he proceeded to the monastery of Villiers, where the whole chorus rejoiced on his arrival; and, after a year spent with them in holy discipline, he became a monk there. Then did he love and humbly revere all the brethren, in God and for God; and knowing that pride was the root of all evil, he became mild and humble of heart. A wise dissembler, he studied to conceal whatever virtue he daily practised, fearing as if to be plundered unless that treasure was concealed. Being now rich in Christ, he despised the world, and of a lion became a lamb. He was sad with those that were sad, he consoled them and assisted them; giving offence to no one, constant in prayer, cheerful in fastings, fervent in the divine offices, being filled with all charity, and clothed with the marriage garment *."

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* Annal. Capucinorum ad an. 1562.

That these conversions generally were thus complete and durable, we have innumerable testimonies to prove; but we should observe also that the pictures given of them by the modern writers represent exceptional instances, against which the Church had expressly provided by the most severe censures. The Council of Nice decreed ten years of penance to those who should resume the belt of warfare, after having laid it aside in a monastery; so that some novices, during the first year of their probation, did not lay aside their secular dress, that, if at the end they should wish to return to the world, they might not be involved in this sentence †. But it is not enough to ascertain the rank and position in the world which these convertites occupied before coming to the monastery. Methinks one would gladly hear what were the circumstances which led them first to turn their eyes towards it, as to a port of safety. Such men indeed love not to burden their remembrance with an heaviness that is gone; yet, if we question them, each will answer, "I do not shame to tell you what I was; since my conversion so sweetly tastes, being the thing I am." Let us, then, hear them speak, for their history will be enough to make us fools in an instant deep contemplative. They might commence it in the words of Dante:—

> "O fond anxiety of mortal men!
> How vain and inconclusive arguments
> Are those which make thee beat thy wings below.
> For statutes one, and one for aphorisms
> Was hunting;
> To rob, another; and another sought,

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* Hist. Monast. Villar. ap. Martene, Thes. Anec. iii.

† Mabil. Præfat. iv. sæc. 7.

By civil business, wealth; one, moiling, lay
Tangled in net of sensual delight;
And one to wistless indolence resign'd:
What time, from all these empty things escap'd
With others, I thus gloriously
Was rais'd aloft, and made the guest of heav'n*."

Some of these narratives are quickly told. Theobald, a venerable man of the Cistercian order, nobly born, by chance seeing St. Bernard, immediately left all and followed him†. Henry, the eldest brother of King Louis VII., who enjoyed many ecclesiastical dignities, while that monarch was on the crusade, coming one day to Clairvaux to consult with St. Bernard, expressed a wish to see also the monks and recommend himself to their prayers. The saint, who always took care in his conversation with guests to suggest some salutary advice for their salvation, after concluding the affair of business, turned the discourse to spiritual matters, and added, "I trust in God that you will not die in the brilliant condition which you now occupy, and that you will experience how useful are the prayers which you have now been demanding of the brethren." The prediction was fulfilled the same day: the young prince resolved from that hour to consecrate himself to God; and, sending away his guards and the troop of gentlemen who accompanied him, he remained at Clairvaux, renouncing all his benefices.

A company of young gentlemen came to Clairvaux on one occasion through curiosity to see the holy Abbot St. Bernard, of whom fame reported such great things. It was then Shrovetide; and they, being in the heat of youth, sought out a place near the church to run at the ring, to exercise themselves in arms, and such like entertainments. The saint entreated them not to do so; but they would not listen to him. He then commanded beer to be brought out and given them to drink; but he first blessed it. Scarcely were they gone out of the monastery, when, moved by a new spirit, they began to talk amongst themselves of the world, of its deceits and dangers. Presently, without delay, they all together, with one mind and will, returned to the monastery, and with great humi-

* Par. xi.

† Hist. Prælator. Monast. de Fontanis, ap. Dacher. Spicileg. x.

lity begged to be admitted into it; and, with great courage and patience, passing through many labours, they gloriously persevered in the order.

Adalbero, a young clerk of Constance, in the train of Godefrid, Duke of Bouillon, came to the abbey of St. Hubert with the duke, to meet by appointment the Count Albert of Namur; between whom there was a grievous discussion respecting the castle of Bouillon. Adalbero came to hear a discussion, and he remained to enjoy that peace, being converted by observing the holy brethren *.

Daniel de Ungrespuch was a German merchant, who used to trade with Venice. While remaining in that city he used often to pass over in a boat to the monastery of the hermits of St. Maria de Muriano, and to spend whole hours in sweet discourse with them. He repeated these visits so often, that at length he resolved to follow the example of the men whom he so greatly loved; and in 1392 he was received amongst them as an oblat †.

Rudolf, elected Abbot of St. Tron in 1107, relates his own conversion. He was born in the town on the Sambre, conspicuous for its monastery of St. Peter, built by the Bishop St. Amand, where rests the glorious saint Fredegand. His parents were plebeian, but most christian and spotless in reputation; showing great hospitality and kindness, without ceasing, to the poor. He was placed at school till his eighteenth year, and on being made subdeacon, with liberty of going where he chose, being induced through love of a certain companion, a clerk, by name Lambert, who confessed to him that he wished to become a monk at Aix-la-Chapelle, he went with him to that city, hoping to see the famous place where warm water springs out of the earth, which is near the palace there; yet nothing was then less in his mind than to become a monk. But when every night, after the manner of monks, the lives of the fathers were read to the brethren at collation, he used to hide himself in a corner, whence he could hear and understand all that was read. Neither did he do this as yet so much for the sake of edification as of merely hearing the miracles of the life of simple men, such as were there read, and of

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* Hist. Andagenensis Monast. ap. Martene, Vet. Script. iv. 955.

† Annal. Camaldulens. lib. lvi.

listening to the novelty of their still more simple style; but when he had attended more frequently and ardently, not so much to the rusticity of style as to the wonderful sayings and actions of the simple and holy fathers, he began to feel a great contempt for the miseries of this present life, and to ascend to a disrelish for the world; and this used to be the subject of his thoughts at night when he retired to his bed. What remains? After a few days he not only confirmed his as yet wavering companion, but took the same habit himself, together with his companion, on the same day of the conversion of St. Paul *.

"Brother Gerlac," says Cæsar of Heisterbach, "as he acknowledged to me, conceived his first design of conversion from seeing a certain monk, whom I knew well, saying mass with abundant tears in his parish church. Gerlac, who served his mass, from that hour, conceived such a love and reverence for the order that he could not rest until he became a monk himself †." "You knew Henry," he says, "our chamberlain, whose conversion was in this manner. Being a clerk and canon of Treves, loaded with riches and honours, he fell sick, and, in hopes of recovering health, he proposed to descend the Rhine in a bark, and consult the physicians of Cologne, who are numerous in that city. As he passed by our monastery he enquired the name of the place, and then said that he would lodge there; so he sent his boys to the abbot to ask for horses to carry him up to it; and they returning with them, he was received to hospitality. That night I know not what he saw, or by what influence he was converted, but in the morning he sent back his attendants weeping with the bark, and then assuming the habit, he remained with us ‡."

Guibert de Nogent also ascribes his own first conversion to the mere beholding monks in their church. "My mother," he says, "having renounced the world after my father's death, I was left alone, without parents, without a master, without a pedagogue; for he who had so faithfully educated me, had followed my mother's example, and taken a monastic habit. So, possessing full

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* Chronic. Abb. S. Trudonis ap. Dacher. Spicileg. vii.

† Illust. Mirac. lib. i. 24.

‡ Ib. lib. i. c. 23.

liberty, I began to abuse it intemperately; to laugh at the churches; to have a horror for the schools; to affect the company of lay youths of my own age who were devoted to equestrian studies; to let my hair grow like theirs; and to indulge so much in sleep that I began to grow fat. Meanwhile the fame of my deeds reached my mother's ears, and immediately, as if anticipating my destruction, she became as one dead. The very clothes which she had herself made for me, to excite me the more, in which I used to go to the church, I began to cut short now after the fashion of youthful petulance; and, in short, there was nothing about me pensive or moderate. My mother, at this crisis, hastened to the abbot of Flaix, or St. Gernier, which was in the diocese of Laon; and he was soon persuaded to receive me as a disciple into that monastery. I call thee to witness, O God! pious disposer of all things, that from the hour in which I entered the basilica of that monastery, and beheld the monks sitting there, I conceived, in consequence of seeing them, such a desire of becoming a monk, that my fervour never afterwards grew cool, nor did my mind ever rest till the vow of my heart was fulfilled. So then, dwelling with them under the same cloister, and considering all their habits, as a flame is excited by the wind, so my mind, from contemplating them, could not but be kindled with a desire to resemble them. At length I disclosed what was in my mind to my mother; but she, fearing puerile levity, rejected my proposal, to my great concern; and, when I applied to my master, he opposed it still more. So by this double repulse I was grievously vexed; but, through reverence for my mother and the fear of my master, I began to act as if I had never thought of such a thing. Thus I remained from the octave of Pentecost till Christmas, when, no longer able to resist thy internal excitement, O Lord, I had recourse to the Abbot of Flaix. I threw myself weeping at his feet, and finally received the habit from his hands; my mother in the distance looking on. And now, O Lord, true light, clearly do I recollect the inestimable bounty which thou didst lavish upon me; for as soon as I had, on thy invitation, received the habit, there seemed to be a cloud removed from the face of my heart *."

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* De Vita Propria.

A manuscript of the abbey of St. Victor, at Paris, relates that William, surnamed of Denmark from his having lived for a long time in that kingdom, being at Epiney, where he had retired in the year 1150, one day, on rising from dinner, a letter was brought to him from the Abbot of St. Geneviève, begging that he would come to him. William cried out, on reading it, "Is this a dream?" Being come to St. Geneviève, the abbot spoke to him of the contempt of the world in a manner so affecting, showing him a crucifix, painted on a window, that he threw himself at his feet, and soon after took the habit and became sub-prior of the house[*]." This instantaneous leaving the pitcher, like the woman of Samaria, for the sake of enjoying that living water which is given by our Saviour Jesus Christ, was thus the form of many conversions. Such men were no procrastinators, having an intimate conviction, like Demophilus, without having read Pindar, that opportunity with mortals is always of short duration—Καιρὸς πρὸς ἀνθρώπων βραχὺ μέτρον[*]. Those old pictures in which the lost souls, horribly disfigured, are represented ineffectually continuing the cry, "Cras, cras, cras!" that sent them to that place of torment, conveyed a lesson in a most impressive manner, which was often also on the tongues of Catholic philosophers. "Promise me not on to-morrow," says Marsilius Ficinus. "If on the morrow only you were to eat and drink, what would you be to day, my friend. Perish that to-morrow that you may not be lost to-day. O how many men are deceived by that to-morrow[‡]!"

Love, from which all passions spring—for, as the Ascetics say, men desire what they love, and hate, and fear, what they think contrary to it;—love, which Dante, Michael Angelo, and the great philosophers of the school who formed them, all speak of as belonging peculiarly to minds well born and to noble natures, was a fruitful source of conversion in ages of faith, when oft a greater power than men could contradict thwarted their intents. Borne on a fragile bark, amidst tempestuous seas, whether in the morn or the eve of life, like Michael Angelo, they were led by some such contradiction to think of the account which all must give, and to consider in what clouds of error was their impassioned soul involved when art or beauty was its idol. "What," exclaims that great poet, "becomes of all such thoughts on the approach of the two deaths—the one certain, the other menacing? Neither painting, nor sculpture, nor the love of that human grace they represent, can delight them more: their soul flees to the love of God, who extends upon the cross his arms to receive them *." That all, through the ages of faith, the love of creatures, the appreciation of their beauty, and of their innocence, was leading men to conversion, may be witnessed in every work that bears the stamp of the popular genius of the time. Dante puts in the mouth of her he loved these words: "When sweetest thing had failed thee with my death, thou shouldst have pruned thy wing for better realms, to follow me, and never stooped again;" as if the remembrance of her alone ought to have raised him up to heaven †. What a testimony is here! and such, in fact, was the consequence of noble affection: for thousands could be shown, and pointed out by name, whom love led on to sanctity. Converts, who had come to peace from this side of the labyrinth of life, might be distinguished perhaps from others by a certain tone peculiar to them. It is not that they evinced a desire to return again to earth, according to the common fable of the day, which represents them inwardly pining till they can throw off the cowl; for, as we before observed, with respect to the converted warriors, men from the cloister did not look back so upon their former years; but it is that they evinced in general more reserve than others, and perhaps, if possible, a still greater abstraction from the visible world, when they sung that hymn of the church for lauds in the spring:

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[*] Lebeuf. Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, xiii. 323.

[†] Pyth. Od. iv.

[‡] Epist. lib. i.

"Dies venit, dies tua,
In qua reflorent omnia:
Lætemur et nos in viam
Tua reducti dextera."

"For, O stranger," as the monk would say, if he had ever heard these words of Landor, "the heart that has once been bathed in love's pure fountain retains the pulse of youth for ever. Death can only take away the sor-

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* Mich. Ang. Son. xxxv.

† Purg. xxxi.

rowful from our affections: the flower expands; the colourless film that enveloped it falls off and perishes."

Antonius Santaranensis, when a youth, loved a beautiful girl, and sought her in marriage; but she answered contemptuously that he should first go and wash in the Jordan before she would accept him. Through ardour of love, accordingly, he set out and went into Syria, bathed in the Jordan, and brought back a phial of water; recounted to the maid the labours and perils of his journey, undertaken for her love. The ingenuous girl thought she ought to yield to such constant affection, and so married him whom before she had despised; but, shortly after dying, Antonius bad the world farewell, departed into Castile, and took the habit of the Minors, and died in odour of sanctity in 1270 *. In fact, compassion, so closely allied to love, led many to the cloister in ages when men had such great hearts, so susceptible, like him who fainted at the recital of Francesca.

The calamities of life opened wide the door of cloisters for those whose mourning was from God, whom fond nature indeed commanded to lament, but whose tears, as Shakspeare says, were reason's merriment; for the monks who pitied the sorrows of these wanderers did not, like the Minerva of Homer, accuse heaven of cruelty towards them, but saw only fresh instances of its providence and of its mercy; for, as a poet says,

> "Seeds burst not their dark cells without a throe,
> All birth is effort—shall not love's be so † ?"

St. Cloud, son of Clodomir, King of Orleans, and grandson of Clovis and of St. Clotilda, after escaping assassination when a boy by his uncle, who murdered his young brother, coming to reflect upon the vanity of greatness, betook himself to a solitary life, and finally retired to a small monastery, which he built, at Nogent; which place, where he died, ever afterwards bore his name ‡.

Robert de Grentemesnil was a warrior who had been knighted by William the Conqueror, after having been his squire for five years. He had seen his father perish in an unhappy war of the barons, and a new husband,

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* Wadding. An. Minorum, tom. iv.

† Trench.

‡ Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, vii. 29.

William, Count of Evreux, occupied his place. These two events threw the young baron into a deep melancholy, and the court could not dissipate it. "Considering the mortal state, elegit magis in domo Domini abjectus manere, quam in tabernaculis peccatorum ad tempus ut fœnum florere[*]." His two sisters, Emma and Judith, embraced at the same time the monastic life, and took the veil in the chapel of St. Evroult. Thus did he obtain deliverance from the deceitful world, and from its cruelties come to this peace.

In the twelfth century the family of the counts of Raperschwil was rendered renowned by the two brothers Rudolph and Henry; the former lived at Neu-Raperschwil, the latter at Wandelberg. Both were distinguished warriors, both had made a pilgrimage to Palestine; Henry, besides, had been to Egypt and to Compostello. After the death of his wife, Anna of Homberg, and his only daughter, Anna, he founded the cloister of Wittingen in 1227, into which he entered himself in 1243 as a common conscript brother.

> "Hark!
> Was it the wind through some hollow stone
> Sent that soft and tender moan?"

It may be the sound of lamentation, which will at moments find utterance, even within this house of peace; for we may say of some who dwelt within these vaults, of whom distinct we hear the sighs, that "their's was not a new sad soul. What had not each of them endured!" Sorrows of the mind, sufferings of body, there was no bitterness in the cup of life that could be new to his lips. "I can bear greater things," he might have replied, in the words of Ulysses,

> ἤδη γὰρ μάλα πόλλ' ἔπαθον καὶ πόλλ' ἐμόγησα
> κύμασι καὶ πολέμῳ[†].

In the retreat of Hugues de Grandmenil, after his combat with Raoul, Count of Mantes, Richard de Hendricourt received a wound. He was flying as fast as his horse could carry him, and trying to ford the river Epte, when a knight who followed wounded him with a lance in the back. Carried by his brethren of arms to New-market, and fearing death, he followed the advice of Hugues, to whose house he was attached by military service, and made a vow to combat for God under the monastic laws. Proceeding, therefore, to the abbey of Ouches, he soon recovered, though not altogether, and lived seven years there full of fervour, and serving the church in diverse manners*.

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[*] Orderic. Vital. lib. iii.

[†] v. 223.

Blessed Conrad, of Placentia, of the illustrious family of the Confaloniera, in 1290, a youth of the best dispositions, and bred to all accomplishments, tall, of elegant form and noble countenance, received in marriage Eufrosyna, the daughter of Landina, of a house equally noble, and of great virtue. They lived together tranquilly and piously till the great artist contrived by a singular device to draw to himself this elect soul. It happened that while hunting and following an animal which hid itself in a dense thicket, he ordered fire to be applied to it, and the flames caught the neighbouring trees, and by the force of the wind soon extended far and wide, causing great destruction and irreparable damage to the inhabitants of the country. The prætor of the city sent his satellites to discover the author, but Conrad by unknown ways returned secretly home. The officers found no one but a rustic collecting wood from the fire; and as he trembled and remained dumb at the terrible looks and questions of the officers, they seized him, hurried him before the judge, put him to the torture, and through pain he confessed that he had done it. Then being condemned to the stake, he was carried to it through the street in which Conrad resided. When the young nobleman heard that the innocent was to suffer for him, he rushed into the midst of the crowd, and proclaimed himself the guilty person, and approaching the Prætor, Galeazzo Visconti, informed him of the whole circumstance. He was pardoned on the ground of its having been done unintentionally, but he was required to repair the loss which the fire had occasioned. His friends and parents and his pious wife contributed; but his mind had received such a shock, that he deemed it better thenceforth to leave those to love the world, and to serve God alone. His wife desired to enter a convent of Clarists, and so having given away all he had, he departed pennyless from his native soil in a foreign dress, and came to a solitary place called Gorgolarum, where some pious men led a holy life under the third institute of St. Francis; but as many of his ancient friends, drawn by the report of his sanctity, came to see him, he left that place and went to Rome, whence he passed into Sicily, which was then renowned for the number of pious men there. After passing by Caita and Palermo, he withdrew into the cells or caverns of Pizzoni, at the third stone from the city of Netina, situated among the mountains, and which are now called from St. Conrad, and here he lived in great penitence and sanctity in a rocky cave *.

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* Orderic. Vital. lib. iii.

Let us hear another instance. The enemy burst into the castle of the Marquis Malaspina, slew him and his brothers, and lest any posterity should remain, threw William, son of the Marquis, only five years old, from the window of a tower in the sight of his mother, who at the instant commended him to the prayers of St. Francis: that night on the departure of the enemy the child was heard crying at the gate. It was the little boy restored to the widow. On growing up, he fulfilled his mother's desire, and assumed the Franciscan habit in the convent of Parma †.

Remorse was another source from which conversions came, and strange were the first greetings of the men it drew, who might have truly said on entering,

"If there had any where appeared in space
Another place of refuge, where to flee,
Our hearts had taken refuge in that place,
And not with thee ‡."

Of these conversions, Cæsar of Heisterbach cites curious examples. "I said," he observes, "that many became monks through fear of hell; such were men who had studied magic, and given themselves to Satan, and had been miraculously converted by visions §."

Guido Bonatus, the Florentine, that man of dark renown as an astrologer and mathematician, of whom we spoke in the last book, though Wadding only styles him "a philosopher, to hear whom disciples flowed in

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* Wad. An. Minorum.

† Id. tom. viii.

‡ Trench.

§ Lib. i. c. 33.

from all parts of Europe, and who in the tumults of Florence, being exiled, took up his residence at Forli," at an advanced age embraced the order of St. Francis, in the province of Bologna, and humbly and holily terminated his life *.

Guido da Monte Feltro, Count of Urbino, whose posterity became the princes of Urbino, a man renowned through all Italy for his military glory, having conquered so many cities, wearied at length with so many wars, sought to make his peace with the holy see, and for the injury which he had wrought in war, threw himself at the feet of Celestine V. and of Boniface his successor, and begged to be received to grace, promising to make restitution, and as a sign of perfect contrition and true penance, expressing a wish to be received into the order of the Minors. To that effect, the pope wrote to the minister of the province of the marshes, and on the feast of St. Gregory Thaumaturgus, that hero renowned for warlike glory, assumed the Franciscan habit in the convent of Ancona. The rest of his days he past in constant prayer, and in the exercise of the most profound humility; and made a blessed end in that cloister: which evidence of domestic witnesses and serious writers is to be preferred, says Wadding, to the poetic fictions of Dante, who places him in hell, for having given perfidious counsel to Pope Boniface, and for having at his desire resumed his former ways †.

The conversion of John of Erfurt was most affecting. This youth in the beginning of the fifteenth century, born of a noble race of Thuringia, loved a maid of equal birth, but found a rival in another knight. They agreed at length to fight for her; the day was fixed; crowds assembled; the two knights came forth, adorned with their most sumptuous ornaments. Thrice they ran against each other with terrible effect each time, and the third fall proved fatal to his opponent, who lay dead beneath his horse. A general shout hailed the conqueror; but this spectacle of death had a different effect upon him. He rode off instantly to the door of a Dominican convent, and called out to them to open. The porter, all astonished, let him into the court. John alighted, and held his horse a long time, till the prior came down to ask what he

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* An. Min. tom. v.

† An. Min. tom. v. 1296.

wanted; at whose feet he threw himself, and besought admission into the order. The community was called to deliberate, and the next day he was received. Soon after, his father and relations arrived, threatening vengeance unless he were delivered; but the friars succeeded in soothing them. This convertite became an apostle to some Prussian tribes, and died in odour of sanctity in 1464. Thus there were occasions, when, as Climachus says, it was better to afflict parents than our Lord Jesus; for he created and saved us, whereas their love often betrays its objects. Aristotle himself taught that there were times when a physician or a commander were to be obeyed rather than parents *; and those who blame St. Thomas for flying from his father's house, never think harshly of Telemachus for leaving his mother to mourn his absence, without having apprised her of his project †. The authority of parents being a participation of that of God, from whom, as St. Paul says, is all paternity; when God commanded one thing, and parents a contrary, there was no question as to the principle, though there might be difficulty as to the circumstances by which men were to be guided. However, all through the ages of faith the instances of such contrariety were of the rarest possible occurrence.

But to proceed. Here is another convertite whose history is deeply affecting. Jacoponus was born in the city of Todi in Umbria. At first he applied to civil law, in which he made such a proficiency, that he was created a doctor. In this early stage of his life he courted honours and luxury, and held human things within his arms with a close embrace; and all arts and frauds he knew. He married a noble lady adorned with all virtues and of singular piety, yet who, through love of him, adopted the manners of one who meditated only vain and profane things as a worldly woman, in order that she might appear not inferior to her husband. Meanwhile, not forgetful of God, she led a holy life in secret, and under the veil of an ambitious splendour, concealed great virtues of mind. It happened one day, that as she was assisting with many noble ladies at a certain spectacle of games, in the midst of the joy and plaudits of

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* Ethic. ix. 2.

† Od. iv.

the assembly, the beams on which the spectators sat gave way, and suddenly that whole troop of women were buried in a mighty ruin; some had their limbs broken, others were wounded mortally, amongst whom was the wife of Jacoponus, who remained speechless, and shortly after died. The husband, on hearing of what had happened, flew to the spot, seized his wife in his arms, and carried her out. On uncovering her bosom, in order to assist her breathing, lo! under the luxury of a precious vest, he beheld next her skin a coarse hair shirt, which she was thus wearing on the very day when he thought that she with other women was abandoned to the delights of secular entertainment. Immovable, with fixed eyes like one wrapt in a maze, he stood discerning the hidden virtue of his spouse, and the secret of her thoughts respecting the vanity of the present, and the importance of the future life, arguing a mind so different from what he had always wished to think that she possessed. Syllable he spoke none; but wore the semblance of a man by other care beset, and keenly pressed, than any thought of those who in his presence stood. This was not a vain astonishment, or idle perturbation, but that holy sorrow which renders the soul and spirit dear to God. From that moment he began to philosophize subtilly in the school of Christ, became a most holy man, and so verified the apostle's words, that an infidel husband is sanctified by a faithful wife. Thus being seriously turned to God, he surveyed the darkness which had before encompassed him, and resolved to renounce the world for ever, and to dedicate the remainder of his life to God alone. So he withdrew from the honours and pursuits which had engrossed him in the city, and sought no longer any thing else, but how to conquer himself, subdue his passions, and do penance for the sins of his past life. Giving all his riches to the poor, he clothed himself in a vile habit, and desired to be despised and rejected by all men; so that through the city and villages adjacent he even courted the derision of the vulgar—ingenious and most holy artifice to avenge her whom he had loved vainly until now. For reflecting that his wife had sinned through human respect and regard to his opinions, it was most just he thought, that all the scorn and infamy that the meanest profligate could merit should light on him. So he counterfeited idiotcy, and made his appearance as a hideous vagrant amidst the public games at Todi; but no one amongst grown-up persons laughed at his extravagance, for, suspecting his purpose, all were struck with astonishment and admiration, at seeing a man once so noble and wealthy, now such a humble penitent. A day being fixed for the marriage of his niece, his brother sent to request that if he assisted at it, he would not dishonour the family by any extravagance: he replied that his brother might attend to the honour of his family, but that his thoughts were elsewhere set. In fact he appeared suddenly in the midst of that joyful feast, covered with mud and feathers, like a wild monster, more hideous than any African savage, and the company broke up in consequence, some with indignation retiring, others with pity. The children used now to pursue him, and style him Jacoponus contemptuously, instead of Jacobus, his baptismal name, and that title he chose ever afterwards to bear: still, in the midst of all his extravagance, his grave and wondrous answers used to fill men with stupor and admiration. A citizen of Todi having purchased a colt, and wishing to send it to his house, asked Jacoponus, who stood nigh, to lead it home, which he promised to do, replying, "Trust me, I will take it to your home:" he took it to the church of St. Fortunatus, where that citizen had his ancestral tomb, and he fastened it to the stones of the sepulchre. The citizen, on learning what he had done, returned to his house in thoughtfulness and dread.

Ten years did Jacoponus spend in this manner, which he commemorates in his poem of Odario. Finally, he desired to receive the habit of St. Francis, but the Minors feared to receive one amongst them who passed for an idiot or a maniac. After this repulse he was not seen for many days; but at length he returned to the same convent, and delivered a manuscript to the friar, with a request that it might be presented to the guardian. This was the book which he had just composed on the contempt of the world. The friars on reading it, and hearing that he was the author, discovered the mystery of his penance, admitted him with veneration, and immediately gave him the habit.

The servant of God was a noble civilian and doctor.

Nevertheless he refused to be raised to the priesthood, and desired to remain a laic; and under the name of brother Jacoponus was he received. Within the cloister now he only sought how to humble himself, and imitate Jesus Christ; all night long he used to exercise himself in prayer and meditation; being asked what he was ready to suffer, he replied, that he desired to suffer all the pains of earth and hell if, what is impossible, he could satisfy the divine justice, and be anathema from Christ for Christians, Pagans, Jews, and Demons. It would be the highest joy, he said, to suffer for all these in hell, in order to imitate Christ, who would have saved all. Thus was he filled with the fervent love of God: he sung, he wept, he broke forth in sighs; and withdrawing into solitary places he would embrace the trees, and in an ecstasy of divine affection cry out, "O sweet Jesus, O most loving Jesus!" Being asked by one of the brethren on a certain occasion why he wept so, he replied, "Because love is not loved—quia amor non amaretur." Inflamed with divine charity, he was no less zealous to defend the honour of God, reproving vices with admirable liberty, and, like others profoundly devoted to the holy see, not sparing on one occasion even the person of the chief pontiff; on which account, after the twentieth year of his being in religion, he was confined by order of Boniface VIII. It is said that the pope passing by the prison, and seeing him there, asked when he thought he should get out? and that he replied, "When you enter it;" which prediction was verified; for when Boniface was sacrilegiously captured by Colonna at Anagni, Jacoponus was liberated.

From that time his whole life seemed absorbed in divine love. He composed several beautiful canticles, indulging like a swan in melody shortly before his death. At length, being very old, he fell sick; and the brethren seeing that his death was near, advised him to fortify himself with the sacraments of the church; but he said that it was not yet time. Some one then not understanding him, exclaimed, "Do you not know, father, that unless you receive the mysteries, you will depart from life like an atheist;" when he answered, "I believe in three Persons of one Divinity, which created the world out of nothing, and in Jesus Christ His Son, born of a virgin, and crucified." The brethren, surprised at his answer, observed, that this was not sufficient; but that he must receive the sacraments of the church; he replied, that he fully intended to receive them, but from the sacred hands of his dearest friend, brother John of Alvernia. The brethren began to lament, supposing that this brother, who was so far absent, could not arrive in time, and they urged him the more; but, as if not hearing them, he began to sing that canticle, "Anima benedetta dal alto creatore, risguarda il tuo signore, che in croce ti aspetta." Scarcely had he ceased, when, lo! two brethren are seen approaching, one of whom is John of Alvernia; the two holy friends embraced, and after exchanging tokens of devout affection, John administered to him the sacrosanct mysteries, after which he sung that hymn, "Jesu nostra fidanza, del cuor somma speranza;" and having finished it, he exhorted the brethren to persevere in the way of holiness. Then, with upraised eyes and hands, with a fervent spirit, he said, "Domine, in manus tuas commendo spiritum meum," and so passed from that state of lamentable exile to the eternal glory. He expired on the very night of our Lord's nativity, and at the moment when the priest at the altar, singing the first mass, was entoning the angelic hymn of Gloria in excelsis Deo; and all who were present felt convinced that he did not breathe his last through force of the disease, but through ardour of divine love, which, at that moment, overcame his heart, and let loose his spirit through the weakness of its fleshly tenement. Such was his blessed death. His sacred body was carried in solemn train to Todi, and buried in the convent of St. Clare, which is without the walls. It was afterwards removed into the monastery of St. Fortunatus within the city. The Bishop erected a noble tomb over it, and placed on it this inscription—

> "Ossa beati Jacoponi de Benedictis Tudertini
> Fratris ordinis Minorum, qui stultus propter
> Christum, nova mundum arte delusit, et cœlum rapuit."

In his poesy he neglected refinement of language, so that with the Tuscan tongue he mingled Tudertine, Sicilian, Calabrian, and Neapolitan expressions. From the following lines one may judge of his Latin style, and still more of the profound thoughts which fixed and directed his conversion.

> "Cur mundus militat sub vana gloria,
> Cujus prosperitas est transitoria?
> Tam cito labitur ejus potentia,
> Quam vasa figuli, quæ sunt fragilia.
> Plus crede litteris scriptis in glacie
> Quam mundi fragilis vanæ fallaciæ.
> Dic ubi Salomon, olim tam nobilis,
> Vel ubi Sampson est, dux invincibilis,
> Vel pulcher Absalon, vultu mirabilis,
> Vel dulcis Jonatas, multum amabilis?
> Quo Cæsar abiit, celsus imperio,
> Vel Dives, splendidus totus in prandio?
> Dic ubi Tullius, clarus eloquio?
> Vel Aristoteles, summus ingenio?
> Tot clari proceres, tot rerum spatia,
> Tot ora præsulum, tot regna fortia?
> Tot mundi principes, tanta potentia?
> In ictu oculi clauduntur omnia.
> Quam breve festum est hæc mundi gloria!
> Ut umbra hominis, sic ejus gaudia,
> Quæ semper subtrahunt æterna præmia,
> Et ducunt hominem ad dura devia.
> O esca vermium, O massa pulveris,
> O ros, O vanitas cur sic extolleris?
> Ignoras penitus, utrum cras vixeris.
> Fac bonum omnibus, quamdiu poteris.
> Hæc mundi gloria, quæ magni penditur,
> Sacris in litteris flos fœni dicitur.
> Ut leve folium, quod vento rapitur,
> Sic vita hominum, hac vita tollitur.
> Nil tuum dixeris, quod potes perdere,
> Quod mundus tribuit, intendit rapere.
> Superna cogita, cor sit in æthere,
> Felix qui potuit mundum contemnere."

Such then was Jacoponus; the history of whose marvellous conversion could not but detain us long.

But now,—to cite no more instances of this extraordinary kind, for, in general, divine grace, without the instrumentality of any violent external events, led men to embrace a monastic life,—let us observe what was the ordinary manner of conversion; and illustrate it by examples of transitions both from previous innocence and from the disposition of a secular mind to the sanctity of the cloister, the former being only from peace to peace more profound.

Pandulph was bred a shepherd on the mountains of Tuscany near Pistoia. From youth tending his sheep amidst lonely mountains, he acquired the grace of a celestial life. Such was his abhorrence for money and profit, that he counted all as dross excepting what he gave to the poor; he wore a knotted cord round his waist in memory of our Lord's passion, on which he meditated continually; and while his sheep fed on the pasture he used to climb to the top of the hill, or retire into the wood and pray there. His fellow-shepherds and all the rustic lads respected him; and he used to exhort them to abstain from all sin. In his thirty-third year, being sent on a journey, in crossing some water it chanced—eternal God that chance did guide—that he should meet two Capuchin friars in the same boat which conveyed him. A short conversation with them determined the rest of his life. He was admitted among the novices in the convent of Montepolitiani, where he died in odour of sanctity *.

Heladius, rector of the royal court, as Hildephonso styles him, "Under a secular habit had long fulfilled a monk's vow—inter decorem insolentiamque seculi he loved solitude—and followed secrets; and at length, leaving all things, he fled to the monastery which had long been the object of his affections †."

Thomas Justiniani, a Venetian senator of the illustrious family of that name, embraced a religious life, became a hermit in the monastery of the desert of Camaldoli in 1510. He describes with affecting simplicity the anguish with which he abandoned relations and friends; but nothing could shake his resolution. He persuaded his friend Vincentius Quirinus, another senator of Venice, to follow him, who embraced the same life within the year. Thus these two noble friends became the humble brothers Paul and Peter. Quirinus had written many learned works; he was versed in Hebrew, Greek, and Latin; he had filled many high posts and legations for his country; he had

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* Annal. Capucinorum, 1568.

† Hildephons. Vitæ Illust. Episc. Hisp.

been ambassador to Philip, Duke of Burgundy, to Maximilian, Emperor, and to the King of Spain. Numerous friends wrote to dissuade him, but he was immoveable. All Florence was filled with amaze on hearing of his flight to the desert. He died in the arms of his sweet friend Justiniani, in the thirty-fifth year of his age and third of his being in religion. Justiniani, who signs himself brother Paul the hermit, took an active part in the administration of his order. It was he who surrounded the hermitage with a wall. He died on Mount Soracte in 1528, a most holy blessed death, which he seems to have foreseen and predicted in a certain poem which he composed the same year, in which he sung the combat of nature and of grace. His ancient portrait in his cowl, a most striking painting, is in the possession of that illustrious family *.

Petrus Quirinus, on his embassies for the Venetian republic, had visited Germany, France, Spain, Burgundy, and England, and found no place preferable to the solitude of Camaldoli. So also Andreas Trivisanus, another Venetian senator, had searched various parts of Italy, all Dalmatia, a great part of Greece, and even had been to Palestine, and he found no place safer and more apt for a christian contemplatist than the same desert. So writes Paul Justiniani in a letter to two noble Venetians, his friends †.

But here comes a convertite whose history we have been long promised. "Petrus Urseolus was elected doge of Venice in 976. He for a long time refused to accept it, fearing lest by the ambition of secular honour he should lose the resolution of sanctity, as Dandulus says. At length, however, he was prevailed upon by the people, who supplicated him to consent, for the good of his country. What noble edifices he erected and repaired in the city, and what holy laws he instituted, may be seen in the authors of the Venetian history, and in his life by Guido Grandia. It happened in course of time, that a certain venerable abbot, Guarinus by name, from the farthest parts of Gaul, came for the sake of prayer into Italy, being accustomed to make pilgrimages to various regions of the world. After assisting at the elevation of

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* Annal. Camald. lib. lxx.

† Annal. Camald. lib. lxx. lxxi.

the bones of St. Hilary the second, bishop of Carcasson, he proceeded to Venice, to venerate the body of St. Mark. Having performed his devotions in the basilica, he asked a citizen on leaving the church, where he could find a hospice, who replied, 'Why do you seek a hospice from me, when I durst not grant a lodging to you, my lord, or to any coming to the relicks of blessed Mark?' 'But why so?' demanded the abbot. 'Because the duke of this country,' said the citizen, 'who is the host of all strangers coming hither, has made a decree that no stranger should be received to hospitality by any one but himself alone, or with leave from him; for he has built great houses for the purpose, in which the rich and poor are alike received.' On this intelligence the pious Guarin repaired to the palace and entered it with confidence. 'Who art thou, venerable father,' ask the guards, 'who seekest admittance to the prince?' 'I am Guarinus, coming from far lands, and having visited the oratory of blessed Mark, I seek needful hospitality; and it was told to me to apply here, but I know not to whom I ought to address myself.' Then the illustrious domestics immediately received the abbot, and led him to the duke's bed-chamber. And when the duke saw him, he rose up instantly and gave him the kiss of peace. The next day he desired the holy man to give him advice respecting his own state; for he said he felt it to be full of peril for his soul; and he entreated him to devise some way by which he might be delivered. The abbot replied that he was bound to go to Rome, but that he would soon return, and that then he might depend upon his giving him counsel on that point. Accordingly to Rome he departed, where he saluted the threshold of the Apostles, and threw himself at the feet of the Pope Benedict VII. In fine, he returned to Venice on the day he had appointed. The solemn discussion being resumed in the palace, he advised the duke to renounce the world and the dukedom, and to embrace a life of holy obedience. Now this was the plan which the duke had long desired to adopt, without having ventured to disclose his intention openly. From this moment, however, he began to arrange measures for carrying it into effect.

"On the festival of the martyr St. Ammon, which was in September, having deposed the ducal robe, he secretly left the palace, and accompanied by Guarinus, Romuald, and Marino, he embarked on a vessel which conveyed him to the abbey of St. Hilary of Gambaranus, which had been erected by Angelo and John, patriarchs of Venice. Early in the morning, as the holy duke did not come as usual to the matutinal office in the basilica of St. Mark, he was sought for in the apartments, but could not be found within the palace. After long search the messengers at length came to the abbey of St. Hilary. Urseolus had prayed Guarinus to shave his beard and to clothe him in the Benedictine habit. They recognised Guarinus, and laying hold of him, asked where was the duke? But he said, 'Lo, here am I, with these my companions. Examine whether your lord be here.' They gazed on all without being able to recognise him. However, as soon as they had departed, the duke fearing lest he should be discovered on a second visit, proceeded immediately with his companions to Verona, on entering which city, in order to pass with more security, he followed the feet of the mules as a humble muleteer, and so escaped through; then mounting their horses they rode on, avoiding Vicenza; and such was their haste, that on the third day they reached Milan. Thence they pursued their journey steadily to Narbonne; and then after taking some rest there, they passed into Catalonia. On coming within view of the white top of Mount Canigo, which is so called from being covered with snow, the blessed duke knew that he was near the monastery that was to receive him, and he said to the abbot, 'I believe we are now near the place. It would be wrong riding thus proudly to approach the court of Angels; for an unworthy servant like me should enter the presence of his master in humility and penitence.' So saying, he alighted, took off his spurs and his shoes, and thus bare-footed proceeded the rest of the way. The brethren came forth a mile to meet them, singing hymns to God, and with a solemn procession bearing the relicks which the abbot had brought with him into the church. Thus in the year 978, one month after his flight, did they enter the abbey of St. Michael at Cuxano, and here he received the habit from the hands of St. Romuald. In this house he remained, a mirror of justice to all, performing every duty with the utmost obedience and humility, being chiefly employed at first in dispensing food to the poor, assisting the sick, receiving strangers, tilling the ground, and subsequently as sacristan, showing himself in all states a man both in heart and word pacific,—Senex in mundo juvenescit in Deo,—accustomed to command, he submitted to obey; from being a lord he became a servant, and led a humble and merciful life. During this time Romuald and Marino lived in a desert place not far from the abbey, in a wood called Longadera, where they erected cells.

"The death of this great duke took place in the fifth year after his arrival. After receiving the sacraments with infinite devotion, he begged the brethren to place him sitting up in his chair, and then asked if the lord of that country would come at his invitation to see him; for he wished to give him useful counsel and the kiss of peace. Accordingly, that nobleman, Oliba, Count of Cabra, came humbly to see the venerable duke, who gave him the kiss of peace, and exhorted him to despise the world for God. His words made such an impression that Oliba soon after chose the monachal life. The blessed duke expired at the ninth hour on the third day of January. Immediately, alternate choirs of monks with tearful and tremulous voices sung the office round the dead. The next day the lord of the province coming with the first nobles, at sight of the pious limbs lying upon the bier, burst into tears. Then the body was brought into the church, and masses were said with all devotion: they buried him in the cloister near the church door. Some time after, it is said, lights used to appear by night over the grave, illuminating in a wonderful manner all the cloisters, so that the brethren did not dare to pass one by one separately before the office, as they had previously been accustomed. The Count Oliba leaving great riches to his son, having a treasure sufficient to load fifteen horses, after consulting with St. Romuald, proceeded in company with Guarinus Marinus and John Gradiniscus to Mount Cassino, where he assumed the habit. St. Romuald desiring to follow them, such was the ardour of the people for possessing him, that, in order to escape, he was obliged to feign himself mad. So he returned at length barefoot to Ravenna. Marinus the hermit, whose only object had been to accompany Oliba to Mount Cassino, and to venerate there the bones of St. Benedict, being accustomed to solitude, departed soon after their arrival and travelled into Apulia, where he fixed his hermitage near Mount Gargano. Here his travels ended, for the Saracens who occupied the top of the mountain strangled the pious hermit in 988, a man of wondrous simplicity and of sincere purity. The Christians, however, gave him an honourable sepulture in the place which they called after him Marino. Guarinus, who was so accustomed to wander, being rather a palmer and superior of different abbeys, than the abbot of any one house, resolved to proceed to Jerusalem, and John Gradiniscus, the third companion of Oliba, proposed to accompany him. That poor convertite was overwhelmed at the thought of being deserted by them all: he wept, and entreated them not to forsake him. 'You, at least,' he said to John, 'ought not to violate the promise you made to St. Romuald, who wished you to keep me company in the service of God.' Nothing, however, could change their resolution, so they set out together. After descending the hill, the horse on which Guarinus rode became restiff, and after wheeling round, struck John with his hoof and broke his thigh. Falling down, he began to think of his own perfidy and disobedience; his broken thigh reminded him of his broken faith. Being carried back, he begged permission to have a cell built for himself near the monastery, after the manner that he had learned from St. Romuald in Catalonia; and there, during thirty years, till his death, he remained in holy conversation. Guarinus and Marinus being departed, and John Gradiniscus coming but rarely to the monastery, Oliba left Mount Cassino and returned to his own country; for the next year we read of his being present at the consecration of a church there. The death of Guarinus is only indicated by letters of Pope Sergius IV. in 1011 to Oliba, his successor, son of that former count whom Petrus Urseolus and Romuald had converted, but who subsequently returned to his former state. Romuald, in fine, by his prayers and tears gained his father, Duke Sergius, to religion, completing thus the group of chosen spirits that surrounded Urseolus *."

The next, also, comes not singly. Let us inquire who he is. The monk who should be thus questioned would acquit him thus.

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* Annal. Camaldulensium, lib. iv. viii.

Charles, the eighth Abbot of Villiers, had been a famous knight, and mighty in deeds of arms. From the school he had been trained to warfare, in which he so greatly distinguished himself, that he became dear to kings and princes; so that the Lord Philip, Archbishop of Cologne, when at the court of Mayence, fearing for his own life, chose him for his special guard. It happened once that he rode from Mayence with the Lord Gerard Wascard to a certain tournament at Worms. After some time they descended upon a meadow, which was most agreeable with flowers of every colour, with streams and fountains, which they traversed in silence, neither speaking to the other. At length, breaking silence, they proposed that each should tell the other what had been his thoughts. "Truly then," said the first, "I have been thinking and attentively considering the wonderful and various beauties of this place, and, in fine, it has been foreshown to me, that all which flourishes in the world is but vanity and of little value:" and the other replied, that such precisely had been his own thoughts. Thereupon they said to each other, "Let us provide something for ourselves of real utility. Shall we pass the sea? But we shall meet with there what we leave behind us here,—noble horses, seductive beauty, brilliant armour and weapons; hearts will be wounded, and perhaps virtue injured. What then? Shall we pass to the wolfskin habits of Emmerode, and declare a truce to tournaments for five years?" This was their resolution. So they proceeded to that monastery, and made their vows conditionally; and then, contented with one squire each, they returned to Cologne. Soon afterwards Ulricus Flasco, who had wished that they might accompany him beyond sea, took himself the same vow, and with them received the habit. Gerard Wascard lost a part of his hand, because he said that he had rather this should happen to him than that the least injury should befall Charles, whom he foresaw would by God's grace become a clerk. After some time such was the event; for Charles having left his parents, and his riches, and his companions, repaired to the abbey of Emmerode, and there assumed the arms of sacred chivalry, and by his example and exhortations, many nobles and chieftains, not only from the holy city of Cologne, but also from remote lands, namely, Ulricus Flasco, Gerald Vastaldus, Walter de Birbac, and many other renowned men in secular warfare, became no less illustrious in spiritual conversation. How much the monastery of Emmerode was benefited by this accession may well be thought. When the Emperor Frederic came to Liege, and a great crowd of nobles had met there, as soon as Charles and Ulric appeared, Philip, Count of Flanders, with a multitude of nobles, went to meet them ; so that the emperor, as if deserted by all, was left almost alone ; for as they had the favour of the emperor in the world, so he loved and honoured them in religion. His son the Emperor Henry no less honoured them ; he gave to Charles a cross adorned with precious stones and gems. About this time Godescald de Volmonsteyn was converted from the world to which he had been wholly devoted : he went to the abbey of Mount Stroeberg, and left all the world in ignorance of his vow. It happened that Evrard his brother was going into Westphalia, and on the way he turned aside to see a certain recluse, who lay concealed on a rock, who received him with great benignity. After the first words of holy salutation she said to him, "My lord, say to your brother Godescald, that his light is burning before the Lord, and that it shines brightly." He, all astonished at these words, said, "Sister, consider what you say. There is no one in all Cologne so devoted to secular pleasures as my brother ; for he attends to nothing else but to satisfy his curiosity. Therefore reflect upon what you say." After much entreaty he extorted from her the meaning of her words ; when she told him plainly, that God had effected this great change. Hearing such news of his brother, he was profoundly sad, like a man devoted to the world ; and returning to Cologne he found that what had been told him was quite true. Godescald thus wishing the world farewell, entered Stroeberg, and led a holy life among that congregation of saints. His brother Evrard was afterwards seen in the monastic habit, in a certain church in which all the congregations of Cologne were assembled *.

Perhaps, however, no conversion was more celebrated in the middle ages than that of the Duke St. William. "Where is there a dance of young people," demands a monk of his monastery in the desert, "or any assembly

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* Hist. Mon. Villariens. ap. Martene, Thes. Anec. iii.

of peasants, warriors, or nobles, or when is there a vigil of a holy feast, when one does not hear sung sweetly in modulated words what and how great was William? with what glory he served the Emperor Charles? and what victories he gained over the Infidels?" The conquest of Barcelona, which they surrendered to him in 801, was his last exploit; for he then resolved to retire from the world, and abdicate his military command of Aquitaine. He found an austere desert in the Cevennes, at the junction of the little valleys of Gelon and of the Herault, and there he built his monastery. Still he doubted whether he ought to come to any instant decision without having consulted Charlemagne, to whom he was attached by the closest friendship. It seemed to him best not to transfer himself to this new warfare until he had gained the consent of this most Christian king. He accordingly departed to the north of Gaul, desired the occasion of a private interview, and spoke as follows:—"My lord and my father Charles, whom the heavenly King hath made king over the people; you know how true and faithful I have been always to you, and how I loved you more than my life and this pleasant light. You know how often as your soldier I have followed you to the peril of death, always ready to lay down my life for you. Now then hear me, I beseech you, patiently: lo! I reveal to you my conscience before God, and demand permission to become a soldier of the eternal King. I have a vow and a long desire, that, renouncing all things, I may for the future serve God in that monastery which by your favour I have constructed in the desert." At these words the countenance of Charles fell, and his eyes overflowed with tears. "My Lord William," he replied, "what a hard word is this,—and how bitter! You have wounded my heart by this petition. Nevertheless, since it is just, devout, and reasonable, I have nothing to oppose to it; nor is it lawful for me to refuse you. If you had preferred the service of any other mortal king, I might indeed have felt that it was an injury to myself,—if you had done it for the sake of greater honours, or dignity, or riches, I would willingly have offered all that I possessed to retain you; but since nothing of this is the case, but that, despising things present, you wish to be the soldier of the King of angels, so be it with you: I consent to it: only you must take with you some gift, as a token of my affection, and a memorial of our friendship." With these words he burst into tears, and fell upon his neck, and for a long time wept bitterly *. After this scene William returned to Aquitaine, visited on his way the famous monastery of St. Julian at Brives, where he deposed his arms as an offering to God. In the twelfth century, his buckler used to be shown in the treasury of that house as a precious curiosity, attesting, by its dimensions and weight, the gigantic form and strength of the hero. Thence he returned to his monastery of Gelon, where he took the habit, and ever afterwards comported himself as the humblest of the brethren. The disciple and biographer of St. Benoit d'Aniane says that he had often seen him in the plain of Aniane, in the time of harvest, amongst the reapers, mounted on an ass, and carrying before him a great vessel of wine, which he presented to each reaper in turn. It must have been an affecting spectacle, to see so humbly and charitably employed the man who had so often given battle to the Saracens, and won such renown among worldly heroes †.

Guibert de Nogent ascribes the restoration of monastic discipline in his time to certain wondrous conversions which had lately taken place; of which one of the most remarkable was that of Ebrard, Count of Breteuil, in Picardy. This was a famous nobleman,—young and handsome, immensely rich, but of a proud mind; a man distinguished, however, for many brilliant qualities, amongst the first nobles of France. At length he began to contemplate his own state, and to consider how he did nothing in the world but consign himself and others to damnation. So having secretly made some of his ancient companions aware of his thoughts, he privately along with them departed into some foreign country, where unknown he employed himself in making charcoal in the forests; and there, when he had sold it in the towns, he thought that he had for the first time attained to supreme riches. Thus the interior glory of the king's daughter might be considered by all. Teudebaldus, who is now universally regarded as a saint, a youth of noble

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* Vita S. Will. Ducis et Mon. Gellonens. ap. Mabil. Acta S. Ord. Ben. sæc. iv. 1.

† Fauriel, Hist. de la Gaule Mérid. iii. 489.

race, had previously renounced the world; and it was his example that Ebrard was animated to follow. Finally he sought the abbey of Marmoustier, where he received the habit. We have heard, that, when he lived in the world, he was so studious of dress that none of the rich could equal him, and of such a haughty manner that no one could hardly address a word to him; but, after he became a monk, we beheld him so careless about his person, that to judge by his dress and humble countenance, you would have thought that he had not been a count, but a poor rustic; and when he used to be sent by the abbot through cities and towns, he never could be induced by his own will so much as to enter the castles which he had left. All these things, continues Guibert de Nogent, he related to me himself when I was young, for he used to treat me with an especial love on account of our consanguinity. On these conversions,—for that of Bruno also was at this time,—vast flocks of men and women began to follow in the holy track. What shall I say of their ages, when children of ten or eleven years used to meditate things belonging to the old, and acted with more discipline than would seem possible for their years! In these conversions took place what was observed in the ancient martyrs,—that greater vivacity of faith was found in the weak and tender bodies of the young, than in those which were in the authority of age and science. Monasteries then increased in number, and were built not only in cities, towns, and villages, but also in the woods and deserts, where formerly were only dens of wild beasts or caverns of robbers. Nobles caught the holy flame, and came forward with their treasures, and illustrious women enriched and adorned churches with precious gifts *.

All these that we have as yet beheld are convertites that once were eminent in secular and military life, but there are amongst them many others, who, though previously separate to the Church, stood in no less need perhaps of total renovation. The crowd which follows, then, is made up of priests and great philosophers, who have come here demanding from the cloister peace. Thus to Mount Casino came Paul the Deacon, after the captivity of King Desiderius, whose notary he had been, and

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* De Vita Propria, lib. i. c. xi.

the death of Ariches, prince of Beneventum, who had received him in his banishment; for the sentence of death passed on him on account of his fidelity to the king had been commuted to exile, through regard for his genius as an historian and poet[*]. Hither came Mark the Poet, contemporary of St. Benedict, who speaks of his own conversion in these lines:—

> "Huc ego cum scelerum depressus fasce subissem,
> Depositum sensi pondus abesse michi
> Credo quod, et fælix vita fruar insuper illa
> Oras pro Marco si Benedicte tuo."

Hither came to receive the habit Constantine Africanus, that prodigy of learning, who brought from the East, after studies and travels of thirty-nine years, a profound knowlege of grammar, dialectics, geometry, astronomy, and all the sciences of the Chaldæans, Arabs, Persians, Saracens, Egyptians, and Indians. Here came also Alfanus, a poet and musician; and Alberic, full of all erudition[†]. Many others of this class might be shown in different monasteries. To single out but one from England,—Henry de Murdac, a great theologian in the church of York in the twelfth century, and of eminent dignity in the province from his nobility and riches, left every thing to become a monk at Clairvaux, under the conduct of St. Bernard. Such convertites excited greater astonishment than the sight of kings, and barons, and lay-men who had studied sciences, in the cowl; for, as Dante says, "More easily and perfectly do they come to the habit of philosophic truth who have never heard it, than they who have heard it when imbued with false opinions[‡]."

Jordan of Saxony being asked, on one occasion, why masters of arts, more than theologians, came to the sermons of the friars, replied, "As peasants that drink water are more easily intoxicated with wine, so those who drink only the water of Aristotle, when on Sundays or festivals they come to the church, are more easily converted by the words of Jesus Christ; whereas theologians are like sacristans, who, from daily habit, pass before the altar without saluting it." In fact, the lay scholars come in crowds to conversion.

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[*] Chronic. S. Monast. Casinens. xv.

[†] Lib. iii.

[‡] De Monarchiâ, i. p. xiii. 41.

"How many learned men and great philosophers embraced the Carthusian order, beginning with St. Bruno? Sutorus enumerates them:—Guigo de Castro, Rifferius, Trusianus the Florentine physician, Ludolphus, Henricus de Kalkar, Rainald, Bonifacius Ferrarius, brother of blessed Vincent the Dominican, Henricus de Cosfeldia, Adrian, John de Teneramunda, Hermann, Henry de Halsia, Stephen de Senis, Goswin de Beca, Oswald de Corda, Gerard de Stredam, Nicholas Albergatus, Bartholomew of Ruremunda, John of Louvain, James de Paradiso, Ægidius Aurifaber, Ulricus, John de Indagine, Dionysius Rickel, James de Gruytrode, Henry de Piro, John Venetus, Henry Vroede, Henry Arnold, Gerard of Breda, Henry Loen, Laurentius, Martin of Laon, John de Lapide, Werner de Laer, Peter Ruffi, Francis de Puteo, author of the Margarita Philosophica, and many others *. In fact, the Carthusians, more than any other order, received into its port the wearied scholars and philosophers of the university of Paris †. Cluny and Cîteaux, however, were not without their tribute. But we must not suffer to pass by unnoticed in the crowd the Socrates of the Gauls, the western Plato, as his friend the venerable Peter, styled Abeilard, of whom he says, after describing his intellectual victories,

"———— tunc magis omnia vincit,
Cum, Cluniensem Monacum moremque professus,
Ad Christi veram transivit philosophiam."

Let us hear the holy abbot describe this illustrious convert in a letter to Heloisa, who called herself the source of all his misfortunes, and from whose affection death alone could take away the sorrowful. "I wish that our Cluny might possess you;" it is thus he writes to her; "I wish that you might there be expecting, with the other handmaidens of Christ, the day of heavenly deliverance; but since this is not granted to us, yet we may rejoice in possessing your—yes, I say, your servant; who is always to be named with honour, that true philosopher of Christ, Master Peter, whom in the last years of his life the same divine disposition transferred to Cluny; and with him enriched it as with something far above all gold

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* De Vita Carthus. II. iii. 7.

† Bulæus, Hist. Universit. Paris. 11.

and precious stones; to relate whose holy, and humble, and devout conversation among us would require no short discourse. Unless I am deceived, I do not recollect that I ever saw any one like him in the habit and gesture of humility; insomuch, that neither Germain was more lowly nor Martin himself poorer to a discerning eye. And when I compelled him, amidst that vast flock of brethren, to hold a superior rank, he seemed to be the last of all. Often I used to wonder, during the processions, when he with the rest walked before me, and to be truly amazed how a man of such a celebrated name could thus despise himself, and throw himself away. He was the most simple, the most abstemious, the most mortified of us all. In him were seen constant study, frequent prayer, perpetual silence, unless when a familiar conference of the brethren, or a public sermon in the convent, obliged him to speak: devoutly he used to frequent the celestial sacraments, offering up to God the sacrifice of the immortal Lamb. His mind, his tongue, his work, were always divine, philosophic, full of erudition and instruction. Thus did this simple and just man, fearing God and departing from evil, pass some portion of his time with us, consecrating the last days of his life to God. For the sake of his health, as he laboured under a bodily disease, I sent him to Châlon-sur-Saône, which is the most agreeable and beautiful spot in our Burgundy, and there I procured him a residence in our monastery near the city. There, renewing his ancient studies, as far as his malady would permit, he was constantly over his books, and every moment, like the great Gregory, he either prayed, or read, or wrote, or dictated. In these exercises did the evangelical summons find him, not sleeping like many, but watching; truly watching; and called him, not as the foolish but as the wise virgin, to the marriage of eternity: for he bore with him a lamp full of oil; that is, a conscience filled with the testimony of a holy life. His last illness was sudden, conducting him speedily to the extremity. Then, how holily, how devoutly, how Catholically, did he make the confession of his faith, and of his sins! With what affection of a desiring heart did he receive the body of our Lord and Redeemer, the viaticum of this pilgrimage, and the pledge of eternal life! How faithfully did he commend to Him his body and soul, here and for eternity! all the religious brethren of that monastery are witnesses. Thus passed to God with meekness and humility Master Peter, the master of science, he who was known to the whole world, and every where celebrated. Therefore, venerable and beloved sister in the Lord, he to whom you were bound in the bonds of marriage, and in the still better chains of divine charity; with whom, and under whom, you have so long served the Lord: he, I say, in the last advent, with the voice of the Archangel, and with the trump of God, shall be restored to you. Be mindful, therefore, of him in the Lord: be mindful also of me and of the holy sisters associated with our congregation *."

With the fame of this flight the whole Christian world rung ; and yet there were instances in which the power of grace was thought to be still more visibly displayed; for the conversions deemed most astonishing of all were those which took place within the cloister itself, of monks who had not the spirit of their order, or of men who had assumed the cowl without purity of intention, and worn it without sanctity of life.

"A wandering clerk," says Cæsar of Heisterbach, "came to Clairvaux with a design to steal, under cloak of religion. During the whole year of his noviceship he could pilfer nothing, such vigilance was observed. 'Then,' said he to himself, 'if I become a monk I shall have more opportunities :' so with that intention he was received to the habit. But the pious Lord, who wisheth not the death of a sinner, wonderfully changed his perverse will; for he became contrite; and so much did he advance in holy religion, that soon after he was made prior of that abbey. Such was the mercy of God and the monachal benediction †." This example, however, exhibits not one of the most desperate cases; for, of all conversions, the most rare and difficult was from the corruption of the best state or from tepidity in the cloister. So deep was the impression of this truth, that we find there was a necessity for guarding monks against being too quick to believe themselves involved in the danger. Let us hear Ælred, Abbot of Rivaulx. "Not long ago," he says,

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* S. Petri Ven. Abb. Clun. Epist. lib. iv. 21. Bibliothec. Cluniacensis.

* Cæsarius Heisterbachensis Illustrium Miraculorum et Hist. Memorabilium lib. i. c. 3.

"a certain brother, renouncing the world, came to our monastery, and was placed by our reverend abbot under my littleness, to be instructed in regular discipline. He used sometimes to ask me how it came to pass, that, while in the secular habit and conversation, he used oftener to feel compunction and to be dissolved, as it were, in the sweetness of divine love. I demanded of him whether he thought his life was then more holy than his present, and more acceptable to God. 'Far otherwise,' he replied; 'since I now do many things, of which if I had done one formerly; not only I should have been thought holy by all, but as worthy of being adored.' On my questioning him still further, he said, that 'he did not remember to have thought much about the many tribulations through which we must enter into the kingdom of God, but he used to feel as if he loved Christ with more sweetness. Yet,' he added, 'I then never suffered any thing for Him, whereas now I suffer much for His sake; formerly I never kept silence, or refrained from idle and vain words; and even after my devout tears, I used immediately to return to laughing and to fables, being borne hither and thither as passion directed; loving assemblies, not shrinking from drinking-bouts, and indulging in matin sleep and in excessive feasting. I was subject to anger, and I had cupidity for worldly things: and now all is changed and reversed for temperance, coarse raiment, study, a hard bed, and a bell to call one up to matins; we eat our bread in the sweat of our faces; we have no will of our own; there is no place for idleness. I ought not to omit some things which no less delight than the former fatigue; there are no quarrels; never is there heard a sorrowful complaint, on account of the dire oppression of the rustics, nor the piteous clamour of the injured poor; no law-suits, no secular judgments; all is peace, tranquillity, and wondrous freedom from worldly tumults. There is such unity existing among the brethren, that we seem to be all one; and there is no accepting of persons, no regard to birth; the will of one is law to three hundred men, who hear his words as from the mouth of God: and, to sum up all in brief, there is nothing in the Gospels, or Apostolic precepts, or books of the holy fathers, which does not belong to this order and profession.' 'What you say,' I replied, 'is not to be ascribed to your boasting, but to the fervour of a novice; yet I wish you to be cautious that you should not believe there is any profession in this life which has not feigned persons attached to it; lest if by chance you should find something in word or deed deficient, you might be troubled. But do you think that all these things which you enumerate, may be compared with your former tears?' 'No, truly,' replied he, 'for that flowing of tears never rendered my conscience more secure, nor delivered me from the fear of death; and now I have attained to this good. Of a truth, I must confess, unless I wish to deceive myself, that were I to choose to return to that former life, it would not be on account of Christ, but for the sake of the world; not through a desire of greater perfection, but through unwillingness to endure my present labours. So that, notwithstanding what I remember of those sweet tears, and that fervent love for Christ, I am compelled by the authority of all Scripture, by reason, and by my conscience, to believe that this life is to be preferred to that former conversation; for it is the keeping of the commandments which proves love.' 'Remark again,' I said, 'how that transitory emotion can be no criterion of the love of God, since men are moved so easily to tears at any tragedy or vain recitation which displays the oppression of innocence, or any beautiful and heroic deed; therefore, it is absurd to estimate love from such vain piety: for were such things really to pass before his eyes, the same man would not sacrifice the least part of his substance to deliver the person for whom he weeps in fable. Much greater folly is it to believe that if any luxurious or tepid person, by the hidden dispensation of God, should be easily moved to compunction and tears, and yet return with the same facility to his former vanities, that his sterile tears and momentary affection would be a greater proof of the love of God than the resolution to fly from whatever is contrary to the divine will, and to endure every labour which is imposed upon him in his name.' 'This is true,' he replied with downcast eyes; 'for I remember that I used to be sometimes moved to tears at the fables which are invented about Arthur; and therefore it was great vanity in me to think that I was holy, and capable of great things, merely because I used often to weep when they read some affecting trait respecting our Lord. Ah, how miserably are such men deceived when they are encouraged, by the experience of such emotions, to return to their unholy living!' 'Truly,' I concluded, 'the pouring forth tears is a most grateful and acceptable sacrifice to God; but only so when offered by the penitent and the assoiled, in the spirit of humility, and with a contrite heart; by those who fly to the bosom of Jesus, and bring forth fruits worthy of penance. Therefore, you and I, and all of us, should labour that this mortification of the flesh, this solicitude of vigils, this coarseness of raiment, this austerity of food, this gravity of silence, this holocaust of the whole interior and exterior of man, may be fattened, as it were, by the sweetness of tears and devout affection; that being lighted over the altar of the heart by the fire of divine charity, it may send up a pleasant savour; but if you cannot have both, it is better to be without tears in apostolic poverty than with daily tears to transgress the divine commands; for though we should raise the dead and cast out devils, and give sight to the blind, we should nevertheless hear from the Lord these words, 'Discedite à me quicunque fuerint operarii iniquitatis *.' "

Moreover, converts within monasteries sometimes complained that they were no longer objects of the same attention as before they entered them, when they were only wavering between the world and God. A knight who had entered the order of St. Francis, complained thus to brother Giles, through whose admonitions he had taken the habit, that since he had followed him to the cloister, he no longer instructed and conversed with him as he had been accustomed to do while he was in the world. The holy man replied "that now being of the house and family of God, he did not think it becoming to advise him any longer, as he was now only his companion and brother †." However, the evil did exist, which rendered necessary conversions within the cloister, and its insidious progress is thus described by Richard de St. Victor: "If you think that you have fallen from that grace which you enjoyed at the commencement of your religious life, attend diligently to what you act silently with yourself, think upon what thoughts occupy you. If you meditate only on vain,

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* Ælredi Rhievallens. Abb. Spec. Charitatis, lib. 11. c. 17. 20.

† Les Chroniques des Frères Mineurs, lib. vii. 18.

only on present things, how is it strange that you should be deprived of a revelation of profound and future things? In the beginning of your conversion, when you thought alone on eternal, alone on spiritual and future things, when you breathed only for things sublime, what wonder if, according to your desire, you deserved to be comforted? The Lord heard the desire of the poor. You have ceased to sit at the feet of the Lord, and to rest like Mary. You are troubled about many things, like Martha. Remember then whence you have fallen; do penance and resume your former works. If you desire to regain the ancient grace, if you seek to recover these visions in your secret chamber, recur to Daniel, renew your devotion, and prepare again your heart for the recovery of that pristine grace *." Again, he speaks as follows: "The voice of the Lord is on the waters. Remember this when you tremble for your own infirmity. Do you fear pride of mind and vain self-confidence? The voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars. Do you fear the flames of passion? The voice of the Lord extinguisheth the fire. Behold, you say, your mind is very light, inconstant, wandering, fluctuating, wishing and not wishing, changing its purpose like the flood of the sea, which is moved by every wind. But he who converteth the sea into dry land, can easily cause the waters which are under heaven to be gathered together into one place, that the dry land may appear. The voice of the Lord is on the waters. How many do you see advancing before you to religion, who were before inconstant and frivolous like yourself, and who are now stable, solid, and perfect in discipline. When you see these men leaving the world to assume the habit of religion, know assuredly that the Lord of Majesty hath thundered, hath terrified their hearts, hath sent forth his thunder over many waters. He who hath given them stability can also strengthen you, and repress these fluctuating thoughts which detain you. The Lord will give you latitude of heart even as the sands on the sea-shore, and you will have as great an abundance of good, as you had formerly of useless and vain thoughts; your heart, like the great sea of the world, will be made to repose, and good desires will be multiplied in it like the sand on its shore. What almighty

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* De Eruditione Hominis Inter. lib. i. 1. c. 19.

power is here displayed? But you say, vile men are in authority who abuse it according to their own caprice. How could I ever endure this, who am an ingenuous and learned man, and of noble family? How should I be able to stoop who bear a lofty heart, exalted above the cedars of Libanus? To this I answer in brief, the voice of the Lord breaketh the cedars. He can easily repress your pride, and make the camel pass through the needle's eye, for all things are possible to him who can do all things in heaven and in earth, in the sea, and in all deep places. Though he behold a heart bitter and fluctuating as the sea, a mind dark as the abyss, yet always and every where he can do all things, and not only at the thunder of his voice, but even often at his aspect, the mountains of arrogance are broken down, the hills of pride bent low, and the cedars of Libanus laid prostrate *."

But let us now observe some of these converts whose deliverance had consoled the family of heaven. St. Gunther had been received into the Benedictine abbey of Altaich, but the habits of his early life were so strong, that all the efforts of the Abbot St. Godehard were ineffectual to overcome his fickleness. To reclaim him from his lingering attachments, a more powerful monitor was, at the abbot's request, induced to see him. This was no less a person than the Emperor St. Henry, who represented to him that as he could not serve two masters, God and the world, he must choose which he would follow. From that moment Gunther became as firm as he had before been wavering.

The next is still more worthy of regard. Suger's early life was in the bustle of secular affairs, amidst wars, and diversions of the chace, which were but ill becoming in a monk. The origin of his conversion is ascribed by Gervaise, Abbot of La-Trappe, to many events that were calculated to turn his mind to meditation. Such were the circumstances of his last military expedition when he followed King Louis against certain nobles who had driven the Bishop of Clermont from his see, at the siege of which city Suger was exposed to great danger, and this he considers to have been the first blow by which God deigned to open his eyes, and make him consider the fragility of life. The second he suggests, was the

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* Annot. in Ps. xxviii.

assassination of Charles, the good Count of Flanders, who had often admonished him to amend his life; and the third, which made sure the conquest of this rebellious soul, the spectacle of the terrible vengeance which King Louis exercised against his enemies. After this last sanguinary expedition, Suger returned to his abbey very pensive, buried in profound melancholy, of which no one could imagine the cause; "he was suffering," says Gervaise, "the pangs of parturition," that is, as St. Augustine explains it, the sorrows of a true penitence, which were to bring forth the fruit of salvation, and produce the formation of Jesus Christ in his heart by a new life. It is the combat of the flesh and spirit, of nature and grace, which causes all these convulsions: and the life which Suger had previously led, had fortified nature so that the struggle was terrible; but his heart having now been shaken, might with only one more effort be carried by assault. The tragical end of two famous abbots of his order, who had been his friends, and who had led a life very similar to his own, was the last blow which grace made use of to carry this fortress, which had long been giving way. The one was Ponce, Abbot of Cluny, and the other Oderic, Abbot of Mount Cassino. The former deposed by the Pope, and excommunicated, died in a tower at Rome, impenitent, notwithstanding every effort made for his conversion. The latter was also deposed and excommunicated: in which acts of just discipline, Suger beheld the judgment passed upon his own conduct by the sovereign pontiff, similar probably to that which awaited himself. Finally, the charitable severity of St. Bernard, his strong and energetic remonstrances, filled with the Spirit of God, completed the conversion of this noble heart. Being thus wholly transformed into a new man, his first act was to reform the abbey of St. Denis by his guidance and example; which he effected without noise, opposition, or scandal. Thus was God glorified, the neighbourhood edified, the church consoled *.

Now comes another of great learning and no less renown, who will relate to us his own conversion. "There was a time," it is Guibert de Nogent who speaks, "when I was animated with such a desire of learning, that I gasped after it, and thought myself

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* Hist. de Suger, iv. v.

worthless if I past a day without study. Often was I thought to be sleeping when my mind was dictating something, or my eyes rivetted on some book. And, O pious Jesu, thou wert not ignorant what was my intention; for I sought to gain praise and to become more honourable in the present world; for I had friends against me, who, though they advised me well, yet encouraged me with praise; and when I fancied that I could soon obtain all that they promised me, they were but deluding me with most vain expectations. However, my mind was thus prepared for temptation, and undoubtedly at that time I was in a certain manner reformed as to my intelligence; for although I still had puerile movements of joy and anger, yet I felt not formerly more horror at the greatest sins, than I experienced now at the least, or rather at what were none at all. I emulated most zealously those whom I saw weeping for their offences, and whatever things were from thee, were to my seeing and hearing most grateful. Clearly, O Lord God, I was then living with a great reverence for thy law, and with an infinite execration of all sin; and whatever could be said and heard and known of thee, most ambitiously did I drink it up. The cruel demon, irritated by these puerile studies, afflicted me now and sent me horrible dreams, so that one winter's night, lying in my bed, and the lamp shining brightly, near me suddenly I thought I heard the voice of many persons, and I seemed to behold a dead man, who cried out; and when I arose up terrified, I saw the lamp extinguished, and a demon stood near, at whose sight I should have fallen into madness, if my master had not hastened to tranquillize and console me. Thus in many ways did the tempter persecute me in these years of youthful tenderness; and, O pious God, how many victories, how many crowns for victories should I this day merit, if I had immoveably persisted in combating him! I now suffered great sorrows from the jealousy and envy of others, who were angry at my success; and I was wearied by constant subtlety of inquisitions. I became so enraptured with the study of versification, that I neglected the serious things of the divine page for ridiculous vanity, and I even affected to write in the style of Ovid and the Bucolics,—so forgetful did my mind grow of the proper rigour, and of the monastic profession, only considering how I could imitate the writings of some poet, without ever considering to what distance this might lead me from the end of my holy order. In fine, such an effect had this lascivious literature upon my mind, that at last, from the abundance of the heart, the mouth began to speak, and I composed letters void of all honesty and moderation: this my deplorable state was divinely revealed in a dream to my master, who beheld an aged man, and heard him say, ‘Give an account to me of the letters which have been composed, but the hand which wrote these letters is not his who wrote them;’ the meaning of which words, my master and I easily conjectured, for they seemed to predict that my hand would not persevere in such compositions; and yet, O Lord, thou knowest how I did still continue secretly to write such poems, without daring to show them to any one, though sometimes I used to recite passages to my companions, and be overjoyed when they exalted them. For all this, O Father, thou didst punish me, visiting me with various sorrows and vexations of mind, and infirmities of body, and thus at length came that sword even to my soul. Having then felt the vanity of useless studies, I began, though late, to breathe after the commentaries on the Sacred Scriptures, to which many good doctors had often endeavoured to entice me. I now gave myself to the study of Gregory and of Anselm, that man of incomparable learning and most holy life, who knew me when a boy; and when he heard how my interior proceeded, used to teach me many things; and when he came to this monastery in which I resided, he so sedulously indulged me in the benefits of his erudition, that I seemed to be the sole cause of his having come to reside with us. In process of time, being exhorted by my abbot, I began to compose a commentary on Genesis; which work, whether it hath done service to any other, I know not, but this is certain, that it conferred no small benefit on me, by delivering me from the idleness which ministers to sin. I have besides written many other works, which I shall not enumerate, because I intend to exercise myself, as long as I live, in such exercises *.”

How many curious facts might be elicited from this affecting description, given by Guibert of his early life,

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* De Vita Propria.

which would throw light upon the intellectual history of the middle ages, and confirm many of our former statements! but for such comments time is not allowed us.

The conversion of John Taulerus, which I shall next relate briefly, was, however, more remarkable. Born in 1294, he had embraced the Dominican order in the convent of Strasbourg, in which city and at Cologne he had preached with great fame, though being still far removed from the spirit of an interior life. His change was mysterious. He had arrived at the age of fifty in 1346, when a simple laic of devout retired life was secretly warned to go to Cologne, a distance of fifteen leagues. He obeyed, arrived, heard Taulerus preach, and the spirit of God made him feel that it was to instruct this preacher that he had been called from his solitude. Accosting him he besought him to be his confessor. Taulerus consented. After three months, the penitent requested him to make a discourse on the means of attaining to perfection. The confessor was surprised at the demand, but he complied, and nothing could be nobler than the sermon which was the result. The laic at his next confession repeated it all word by word, and then asked him if he really felt that he possessed that humility, that purity of heart, and detachment from creatures; or if he, like a Pharisee, only pretended to have these graces. Taulerus, already humbled under the hand of God, opening his eyes to the divine light, heard him with respect and astonishment, and then said, "Finish what you have begun, you know me better than I know myself; behold me in your hands and under your direction; you are my conductor and my master." Thus did this renowned doctor become the humble disciple of a poor peasant. The catechism or alphabet which he placed in his hands, to teach him the practice of whatever was most elevated in religion, has been published by Surius *. The laic, on seeing him well confirmed in his resolution, said that the will of God called him elsewhere; told him to refrain from preaching and from hearing confessions during two years, and to pass that time in solitude, studying the life and doctrine of Jesus Christ in his cell. "And now, my lord master," said he, "confiding in the divine assistance, persevere as you have begun, and resign yourself to God in all things

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* Hist. Vit. Sublim. ex Surio.

with profound and true humility. Trust in God and expect his grace; and obey whatever He may prescribe, whether it be sweet or bitter. As for me, I beseech you, be not troubled that I can no longer remain with you;" and with these words he departed to his own country. The sacrifice thus imposed was immense; but Taulerus never hesitated to comply, giving up all the fruits of his ministry and his great reputation; for, in fact, it soon became the general opinion, that he had lost his senses, his best friends repeating what the Roman governor said to Paul, "Multæ te litteræ ad insaniam convertunt." At length, in 1348, the term of his retreat drew near its end. The church celebrated the conversion of St. Paul. He felt an extraordinary consolation: the laic returned, and told him that the time for resuming his preaching was arrived. Taulerus announced that he would preach on the third day. Immense crowds assembled. He ascended the pulpit, and found himself unable to speak: he wept, but could not articulate a word. The people withdrew, saying "Of a truth he is mad." The laic however returned to him, and suggested that the humiliation must have come from God. There was too much confidence in his first announcement. "Ask," he said, "permission after a lapse of five days, to preach in any obscure church of Cologne, or in your convent." Having obtained leave, his first sermon to the brethren filled them all with astonishment, and his second before the people, on the words "Ecce sponsus venit, exite obviam ei," produced effects that would seem incredible, if they were not attested by eye-witnesses. In fine, through all the provinces of Germany, from the day of his conversion till his death, his preaching reaped innumerable souls, while his predictions as to the religious innovators who were to commence with Wickliffe, seem to warrant the opinion that his voice was miraculously prophetic *. When he foresaw his end to be near, he desired once more to see the mysterious laic; and on his arrival he put into his hands the history of his own conversion. "Do with it," said he, "what you please, only let not my name appear in it." "I have," replied the laic, "five of your sermons, written out as I heard you preach them: I can join them to these memoirs, so as to form a

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* Taul. Serm. Dom. Pri. Quad. 148.

little book." Taulerus made signs of assent, and shortly after was seized with paralysis. He expired in his convent of Strasbourg, on the 17th of May, 1361, nine years after his happy conversion. Taulerus wrote only in German, and to Surius we owe the Latin translation of his works, which, Louis of Blois says, "alone are sufficient to refute all the heresies of these later times *."

One more instance let us mark, and then the chapter ends.

A wondrous conversion was that of John of Fano, provincial minister of the marshes, who, after being the bitter enemy of the Capuchins, and, like another Saul, in his attempts to extinguish that reform at its birth, became suddenly, in 1534, another Paul in regard to zeal and services for the same reformation. The origin of his change is thus related. Having been for some time considering the decayed state of his order, and the virtues ascribed to the new reformers, he called to mind the persecution he had exercised against them, and thought at times that he was called to judgment on account of it. While ruminating these things there arrived late one evening at his convent of Cingulo, over which he presided, two Capuchin friars drenched with rain, to whom the porter, with harsh words, refused a lodging. John, who was walking in the cloister next the gate, asked the porter who they were, and when he heard they were Capuchins, he ordered them to be admitted and received with kindness. So a fire being kindled, while they dried their habit, John considered within himself the rough mended stuff, recalling the ancient poverty of St. Francis, their cheerful faces, their humility, modesty, and simplicity. The sight affected him, as it did also the other brethren. After supper, when the others had retired to their separate cells, John alone remained with them, and began to enquire of them respecting the state of their reform and their mode of life. After they had explained every thing, he rose, broke an apple which he held in his hand into two parts, and gave it to them, saying, "Meanwhile, take this apple, brethren, graciously until you can receive myself more happily." In brief, the whole community resolved to migrate to the Capuchins,

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* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. de S. Dom. tom. ii. liv. 12.

but each had only ventured to disclose his wish to one especial friend. John of Fano having deliberated with Eusebius of Ancona, General of the Capuchins, and each of the brethren having taken similar precautions with respect to himself, while each supposed that there was only one friend privy to his design, it so happened that all set out in one night, though at different hours, taking the road to Rome, so that there remained in the convent only one old layman and a companion. It is said that they all met together before the gate of the convent of St. Euphemia, where they were received with joy, and admitted into the order *.

But we have already overpassed our limits in remaining with the convertites. Our guide proposes to introduce us now to the community at large; as it is important that we should observe the peculiar features of the monastic character, concerning which there are at present such contradictory opinions. Modern sophists, when alluding to the religious orders, are fond of designating them contemptuously as "a race." Well, be it so. Let us observe then by what traits or instincts, if you will, it was principally distinguished.

CHAPTER XIV.

WHOEVER is conversant with the different estates that spring from the different duties in human life, needs not to be told that there are intellectual and external features appropriate to all, in forming which nature, that is, the seal to mortal wax, doth well her art. The pacific inhabitants of the cloister, perhaps above all others, were subject to the influence of a peculiar mould from which no disposition could very long escape; and our object now must be to ascertain what fruits were the result.

It has been said that one should have past five years in tilling the ground to understand the Georgics of Virgil, and twenty years in the management of affairs to see one's way clearly through the epistles of Cicero:

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* Annal. Capucinorum, 1534.

but to comprehend and taste the monastic attributes pourtrayed in the living book, a much shorter interval spent in intercourse with those who wore the cowl will prove sufficient; as every one must feel assured who, like the Author of these pages, has seen monks with his own eyes, and conversed with them as familiarly as with other men.

A sweet and natural simplicity, including all that was gracious in Homeric manners, may be noted as the first effect of embracing that monastic rule which rectifies in men whatever the world made crooked and depraved. "If you wish to have rest in the order," says Cæsar of Heisterbach, "its simplicity will suffice to you *." "Simple is the way of the Lord," says Fulbert of Chartres, "and he who walks with simplicity walks securely †." "You will be simple," say the monastic guides with St. Augustin, "if you do not involve yourself in the world, but extricate yourself from it. By extricating yourself from it you will be simple; by involving yourself you will be double." "Now," says St. Gregory, "truth, which is simple, does nothing by duplicity ‡." Therefore Bona counts among the marks of being led by a divine and not any other spirit, "that love of simplicity which is unknown to the lovers of the world §." The Benedictins pray expressly for this gift in their hymn for Lauds on the fifth feria: for, in allusion to the golden light of morning, the words are these—

> "Hæc lux serenum conferat,
> Purosque nos præstet sibi:
> Nihil loquamur subdolum,
> Volvamus obscurum nihil."

The monks, in fact, brought the simplicity of truth into the paths of life, where it was found as becoming in actions as in words. Nothing required them to depart from it; for "a simple and obedient brother," says the ascetic, "without many arguments and learned discourses, can come to the kingdom of heaven with a safe conscience, and escape the eternal torment of hell ||." Savanorola philosophizes on this theme, and distinguishes, as theologians say, for he speaks thus: "Spiritual and

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* Lib. vi. 1. † Fulb. Epist. 27. ‡ Hom. 22.

§ De Discretione Spirituum, 8. || Thom. à Kemp. Serm. i. 5.

moral simplicity renders us most resembling God; and in proportion as we have this simplicity, our science, and prudence, and wisdom, are increased, as is also our similarity to God. The true christian loves and embraces moreover exterior simplicity according to his degree, the wants of which are to be estimated according to christian simplicity: for all the works of nature are simple and yet unequal; and in like manner all exterior works of the christian are simple but yet different, according as the state and condition of each requires: for man being a civil and social animal, there must be among such a multitude a difference of office and degree *." Such were the principles or the general ideas. Now let us look at the facts that were combined with them.

The character invariably ascribed to monks when not degenerate, is that attributed in the most ancient of books to the great Oriental prince, Job. "Erat vir ille simplex et rectus, ac timens Deum, et recedens a malo." Thus, "To Odo the second, Abbot of Cluny, succeeded Heymandus, of happy memory, a child of innocence and blessed simplicity," says St. Odilo †. Speaking of the blessed Maiolus, the fourth abbot of that house, the same saint says, "He preferred to syllogisms and rhetoric, and all the wisdom of all the philosophers, the practice of Apostolic simplicity, saying with Paul, 'Ego enim didici, in quibus sum sufficiens; scio et humiliari, scio et abundare. Omnia possum in eo qui me confortat.' As is said of Moses, he was loved by God and men, and therefore his memory is in benediction ‡." Of St. Adalhard, Abbot of Corby, Paschasius Radbert says, "There was in his breast nothing but a fountain of truth. Wondrous was his simplicity; if you looked at him attentively, you discerned in him a mind impressed with the seal of Christ. Therefore in no respect could he ever be corrupted §." The very tombs of monks attest this trait in their character. The inscription over Pierre de Saux, Abbot of St. Victor at Paris, in the cloisters of the abbey of Livry at Saux, who died in 1383, began with these words—

"Hic jacet in tumbâ simplex humilisque columba ||."

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* De Simplicitate Vitæ Christianæ, ii. 4. iii. 5.

† Bibliotheca Cluniacens. 269.

‡ Id.

§ Vita S. Adal. Mabil. Acta S. O. Ben. iv. 1.

|| Lebeuf, ix. 313.

To estimate this grace rightly, we should observe that it was a virtue of which the possessor was so little conscious, that he might have truly said with the patriarch, "Etiam si simplex fuero hoc ipsum ignorabit anima mea:" for there was no sophistical affectation under the cowl; so that if a philosopher had come to the monks, and, as Socrates acted with the poets, had asked them concerning the science of their art, with their books before them, however he might be ashamed to relate it, the truth would be that he would find every one present able to discourse better concerning what they had done than they were themselves, and therefore he would be driven to draw the same conclusion in their regard, *ὅτι οὐ σοφίᾳ ποιοῖεν ἃ ποιοῖεν, ἀλλὰ φύσει τινὶ καὶ ἐνθουσιάζοντες ὥσπερ οἱ θεομάντεις καὶ οἱ χρησμῳδοί· καὶ γὰρ οὗτοι λέγουσι μὲν πολλὰ καὶ καλὰ, ἴσασι δὲ οὐδὲν ὧν λέγουσι* *.

And now, pausing for a moment, who can remark without delight this feature in the monastic character? Menedemus used to say of those who flocked to Athens, "that at first they became sophists, then philosophers, then rhetoricians, and at last, like other men, *ἰδιώτας*; because, in proportion as they became conversant with reason, they laid aside pride and affectation." Estimating the monks then by this rule of Plutarch, it is clear what a progress they must have made in virtue. Their very manner indeed proclaims it; for, as Malebranche observes, "All the different airs of men of different conditions are only the natural results of the esteem which each person entertains for himself in regard to others. Fierceness and brutality indicate the man who esteems himself greatly and despises others; modesty is the air of a man who esteems himself but little and others more; gravity is that of one who esteems himself very much and who desires to be so esteemed; the simple air is that of one who does not think much either about himself or others †." Their neglected habit, which, according to the rule of St. Francis, should be mended with patches when torn, was no less significative. "One time Walter, the Abbot of Villers, received a new habit, and some of his friends remarking that it was very handsome, he threw it into some water, and would not wear it until it had lost all its freshness *."

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* Apol. 22.

† Recherche de la Verité, lib. ii. c. 6.

This monastic simplicity exercised an influence beyond the cloister, and imparted an air of candour to social intercourse in general, which is now more rare, since men are become political, and tortuous, and cunning †. That simple and open virtue has given place to an obscure and cautious art; so that what Fulbert of Chartres praises with such feeling as "angelic hilarity with monastic simplicity ‡," would be disdained by our philosophic spies who visit cloisters, as betraying a want of education, or perhaps an inherent vulgarity of mind. Montaigne, speaking of the simplicity of Socrates, makes a remark that would be still more true at present. "If," he says, "any thing like this were to rise up now, there are but few men who would know how to appreciate it: we can discern only the graces that are pointed, exaggerated, and stuffed-out artificially; those which flow under artlessness and simplicity easily escape a rude sense like ours: these have a delicate and secret beauty; and the sight must be clear and piercing to discover its gentle light §." Again, cheerfulness and good-humour were prominent features of the monastic character. "Qui inveniunt pacis consilia, sequitur eos gaudium," saith the divine text; and the monks as truly pacific verified it. They were gracefully-minded men. Their words, their looks, bespoke content, and hope, and gladness. Thus a modern traveller, speaking of his visit to the Grande Chartreuse, says, "You would have been both charmed and surprised with the cheerful resignation that appeared in their countenances, and with the easy turn of their conversation ||:" a grace which monks of the middle ages could recognise, as where Trithemius praises the charming and polished diction of the holy man Berthold of St. Blase in the Black Forest. Michelet is of opinion that the refinement of French breeding before the revolution may partly have arisen from the monastic influence. The flower of delicacy, the exquisite politeness which were found in the parlours of the convents, contributed, he thinks, not a little to forming the tone of manners in

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* Hist. Mon. Vill. 5. ap. Martene, Thes. Anec. iii.

† Drexel. de Univers. Vitiis Linguæ, 2.

‡ Epist. lxvi.

§ Essais, iii. 12.

|| Beckford.

society. The Abbot Gaspar Jongelinus, the historian of the Cistercian order, expressly claims to himself, as observant of the rule of ancient manners, the permission to indulge in words of gaiety—

> "Innocuos censura potest permittere lusus *."

St. Peter the Venerable, Abbot of Cluny, says, "That with St. Bernard he can joke, but that he might fear to jest with others lest he should seem to them to depart from gravity and incur vanity; but with St. Bernard he fears no such charges. Therefore, united in charity, he finds it delightful always to converse with him, enjoying and preserving the sweetness of affection with playful words †."

Kindness and the most benign gentleness towards all men formed another characteristic of the cloistral school, recognised even by writers who seldom favour it; as where Michelet says that the chief features of monastic life, from the sixth to the eighteenth century, were sweetness, innocence, and rectitude of intention. But it will be asked, How should the love of men be a particular characteristic of monks? Are not persons in the world similarly benevolent? Those who know them well, we may reply, seem to doubt it. Boyle says, that, "if all men, at all times, spoke their minds freely, and did not soften one another by concealing their mutual dislikes and dissents by certain outward expressions of kindness or respect, made by compliments and gestures, men have so many imperfections, and withal so much self-love, that scarce any two of them would endure one another ‡." Now, the monks required men to conceal nothing; and yet they esteemed them still: for in all, whatever might be their faults, they could discern some root of goodness, some ground for palliation, and much to love. But were not the secular clergy also benign? Truly they were: still there was something undefinable in the monastic manner more expressive than theirs,—something which rendered it impossible for any one while observing it to repeat, with a shadow of pretext, the exclamation of Dryden, "How are things ordered, that the wicked

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* Notit. Abb. Ord. Cist. lib. iii. 68. † S. Bern. Epist. 229.

‡ Reflections.

should appear more kind and gentle than the good!" The type of monks, with all our old English writers, not excluding even the dramatists of the Elizabethan age,—as Massinger, Ford, and, above all, Shakspeare,—is that of universal, adorable benevolence. "Sweetness, peace, charity, liberality to the poor, and, above all, piety towards our Lord Jesus Christ, are arms which every brother must assume," says St. Anthony, in his first discourse to the monks. "Gravity, sweetness, and humility," says St. Bonaventura, "constitute the grace of monastic manners: gravity renders religious men venerable, and worthy of respect; sweetness, amiable and deserving of love; humility, exemplary, objects of imitation*." "There are some men," he says elsewhere, "who never feel moved with affection for strangers, reserving such sentiments only for those with whom they are acquainted by daily intercourse,—whom they love, not because they are men, but because they are known to them; but such piety is not the gift of the Holy Ghost†." This love of men as men,—the constant desire like that which St. Clement of Alexandria says is the wish of highest God, "to save the whole human race‡," the hatred of the perfect, as when David says, "Perfecto odio oderam illos;" which, as Peter of Blois says, "consists in loving the sinner, as the image of God, while hating the sin §,"—such were the fruits of the cloistral discipline: and hence the monk was always affectionate in look and tender in address, as well became a messenger of grace to sinful men. This explains that passage of an English writer, where, speaking of the accumulation of lands in churchmen's hands, he says, "the nation apprehended that the engaging behaviour of the mendicants would still add to the inconvenience ||." Alas! it is not exactly in the engaging manners of the proprietors who drove them out that the same nation now finds grounds of complaint. But the danger then might be imagined; for engaging truly were monastic manners; so that monks were dear, not alone to the aged and experienced, but even to children—

"———— and children know,
Instinctive taught, the friend and foe."

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* De Reformat. Hom. Exter. c. xvi.

† De Septem Don. Spirit. i.

‡ Protrepticus, x.

§ De Charitate Dei et Prox. 38.

|| Dodd.

How loving and warm-hearted were these holy men! "Strangers and foes do sunder and not kiss," would be their parting salutation: "for why," they would add playfully, "should a man whose blood is warm within sit like his grandsire cut in alabaster?" Never any thing can be amiss when simpleness and duty tender it. The monks loved those who came across their path, with that excellence that angels love good men with. They loved their beauty; as when Dionysius the Carthusian, after observing generally, that "in this life we see the beauty of God in all creatures, in roses and lilies and other flowers; in herbs, in the shade of groves, in the elegance of trees, in the amenity of fields, in the height of mountains, in fountains, lakes, rivers, and streams, in the beauty of animals, and, above all, in that of men," adds, "if God has chosen to place such beauty in some countenances, that we seek with great desire to behold them, and gaze upon them with such delight that we can hardly be satiated or fatigued, or perceive the flight of time, how beautiful is God*!" Back from their presence the cold and formal! Was there mention made of some fancy of an unfledged comrade? They were the first to cry,—

> "Hold it a fashion and a toy in blood,
> A violet in the youth of primy nature,
> Forward, not permanent;
> The perfume and suppliance of a minute,—
> No more————."

Hugo of St. Victor distinguishes expressly "the play of boyhood, of simplicity and innocence, from an illusion of mind, from persecution and death†." The monks knew what became their order, and also what became others who had duties to fulfil in social life. They would have man simple, affectionate, magnanimous. All their praises were reserved for him when he appeared "natural, vigorous, and elastic; such as Poetry saw him first, such as Poetry would ever see him‡." Within the cloister too, all shrouded as he stands in robe majestic, we have him before us in his own features, in his own dimensions; neither cramped by systems, nor jaundiced by schools. "It is a great gift of God to have a magnanimous heart," says Antonio de Guevara, speaking not as conscious of having in his veins the most noble blood of all Castile; but as a friar of St. Francis.

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* De Venustate Mundi, 22.

† De Claustro Animæ, v. 18.

‡ Landor.

The moderns, when it is a question of observing monks, have that defective vision which distinguishes some nations generally, to whom the power of correctly drawing the human figure is denied. A cowl or cord of holy Francis seems to have the power of distorting the conjoined image on their retina; so that many, misled by their report, will be surprised to hear that monasteries contained men whose countenance and form corresponded to this nobleness of the heart within. Yet such was the fact. The monk was often like the Homeric hero,—

—— ὃς ἄριστος ἔην εἶδός τε δέμας τε
τῶν ἄλλων Δαναῶν——— [*].

"If I were to desire to praise the beauty of his person and countenance from his boyhood," says Paschasius of St. Adalhard, "I could not do it justice; but doubtless all flesh is as grass, and all its glory like the flower of grass; but the virtue of Christ, which always flourished in him, remains for ever." Peter, abbot of Mount Cassino, a monk from a child, and of the most holy manners, was of such an angelic countenance and majestic air, that when the Emperor Henry came to that house he was so struck that the chronicler of the abbey thought it proper to record it [†]. In ascribing this sweet and tender disposition to the monks as fulfilling the type of their institution, we have not been separating ideas from facts, indulging in empty speculations and a disregard of truth. Let the following illustrations serve to convince the reader. Of Notker Balbulus we read expressly, that "he desired to lead a life of celibacy on earth, and preserve fraternal love for all men; rather than, with an eye of suspicion, to cherish partialities and hatred [‡]." To Notker Labeo we find this testimony: "Nostræ memoriæ hominum doctissimus et benignissimus [§]." Bertram, Abbot of St. Godehard, in Hildesheim, was never approached by any one, says a monastic historian, though it was only a poor boy or a rustic, but he stretched out his right hand to take his *. Of blessed Berthold, the first abbot of Garsten, an old writer says, "he was of such simplicity, that he used to speak to little boys as if they were old men, and used to win them so †." Benignity is the prominent feature in the character of Erluin, Abbot of Gemblou, in the time of King Otho, as described in verse :—

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[*] xxiv. 17.

[†] Lib. ii. cap. xciii.

[‡] Eckehard, Min. de Vit. Notk. Balb.

[§] Chron. Hepidanni ad an. 1022.

> " Sincero Dominum corde sequi studuit.
> Quam patiens, et quam dulcis, quantumque benignus :
> Alloquio blandus, mira gravitate modestus:
> Mitis erat cunctis, suavis, pius,———
> Quem mœstum vidit, quem tristem, quemque dolentem
> Affatu dulci mœrentia pectora mulcens ‡ :"

as also in that of Halynardus, Abbot of St. Benign, in the tenth century, who "discharged every office with zeal and gentleness, giving no offence to any one, that his ministry should not be blamed §." If St. Bonaventura ever saw any one sad, he could never rest till he had consoled him, and made him joyous ||.

> " He knew his soothing words to weave with skill ;
> Of all my madness told ;
> Then slowly from my brain the darkness roll'd,
> My thoughts their due array did re-assume,
> Thro' the enchantments of that hermit old ;
> ——Now cheeringly,
> Though he said little, did he speak to me,—
> ' It is a friend beside thee,—take good cheer ;
> Poor victim, thou art now at liberty !' "

Thus did the monk practise the precept of St. Columban, "Pro misero miserans lacrymas effunde sodali ¶."

Let us hear the friar speak, in his sweet simple way. "St. John slept on the bosom of Jesus before he wrote his Gospel," says the Franciscan, Antonio de Guevara, "whence we may collect that we shall learn more secrets

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* Bodonis Chron. ap. Leibnitz, ii.

† Vita ejus ap. Pez. Script. Rer. Aust. ii.

‡ Libel. de Gestis Abbat. Gemblacensium, ap. Dacher. Spicileg. vi.

§ Chron. S. Ben. ap. Dacher. s. i.

|| Wadding, iii.

¶ S. Columbani Carmen Monostichon, ap. Canis. Lect. Antiq. i.

sleeping near our Lord, than studying in all the schools of the world. The science we learn depends on the school where we study. I say this from experience: for in the school of the world I only learned to play the fool; in that of Satan I only learned malevolence; in that of the flesh I only learned to sin; in that of men I only learned to hate; but in thine, O my God! I have only learned to love. In this wretched world the moment that a poor sinner falls, he is detested and shunned by all, as if no one else was accustomed to sin; but I assure you, if all those who have sinned, and who glory in having sinned, were dead, there would be no occasion to build many houses, nor to sow much corn. But it is not so in the house of God; for what was snuffed used to be placed in basins of gold, to show that we ought not immediately to defame the sinner; for if God, who is the most injured, pardons, it is not reasonable that another great sinner should condemn his brother. This is the difference between serving God and the world; that in the house of the world many services are forgotten for one offence, and that in the house of God many offences are pardoned for one service *." Then preaching before the emperor, Charles V., in Lent, on the conversion of the good thief, after remarking that he remained three hours on the cross, and Judas three years in the Apostleship, he exclaims, "O secret judgments of God! that, after thirty years spent wickedly in the world, this thief should satisfy God in the three hours that he was good upon the cross, and that these three hours should serve him more in stead than three years of apostleship served Judas. Truly in the house of God good thieves receive more honour than bad emperors. What faith was here! Faith had Abraham, but it was when God spoke to him from heaven: faith had Isaac, but it was from having seen God in his majesty: faith had Moses, but it was from the vision of the burning bush: faith had Ezechiel, but it was from having seen God surrounded with seraphims: whereas this good thief saw no miracles, and yet believed, calling him Lord whom he saw upon the cross: and how wondrous was his reward! for we daily see men rob in childhood, in youth, in old age, and even to the gibbet; but only of this thief do we read that he robbed on the

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* Lib. ii.

gibbet, and what he took was the kingdom of heaven. O good Jesus, O love of my soul, if you permit me with such a thief to be a thief, I promise and swear to steal not an apple like Adam, nor idols like Rachel, nor a flask like David, nor a golden rod like Achior, nor grapes like the men of Moses, but thyself, Lord; for having found such a booty, was this thief made for ever happy. Cain offered to God fruits, Abel lambs, Noah sheep, Abraham pigeons, Moses incense, David gold, Jephtha his daughter, and Aaron his son, but the good thief offered his own heart; so that no one should marvel that I magnify him thus. For if I am asked what did he offer, I will demand in my turn what did he reserve? He that was of old called the God of vengeance, is now named the Father of Mercies, and indeed justly; since he pardoned St. Matthew his publican manners, the Magdalen her vanities, the Samaritan her adulteries, the thief his robberies, St. Peter his denials, and the Jews his death. O good Jesus, O love of my soul, let me ever remember that thy Father is no longer called the God of vengeance, but that Father of mercies is now, and ever shall be henceforward his name."

All persons conversant with the monastic character will admit that one can recognize it in every line of this passage. Had I not reason then to say that monks were skilled to cherish the love of men, whatever might be their faults? In regard to persons who were obnoxious to censure, it was expressly prescribed to them to show indulgence and liberality.

"When the brethren go forth, two by two, from the convent," says the rule of the Minims, "and see men clothed in soft raiment, and feasting delicately, they must not despise nor judge them, but let each one judge himself*."

A minor friar, who used to commend himself to the prayers of every one, met a woman, who was a sinner, at the city gate, and asked her to pray for him. "Father," she said, "how can the prayers of such a woman as myself profit you?" "Nevertheless," he replied, "pray for me, such as you are, and perchance your prayer will profit both you and me." She was converted by these words; she rose up contrite, confessed her sins, and led a holy life ever afterwards[*]. "Let us attend to the judgment of the love and promise of God," said that friar with St. Augustin; "What is the earnest we have received? We hold the death of Christ: we hold the blood of Christ. For whom is he dead? For the good, for the just? Nay, Christ died for sinners. Let human fragility take courage then: let it not despair[†]." Every fibre of spiritual pride was eradicated from the heart of monks. The personal humility which breathes in their looks breaks out where one might least look for it, as may be witnessed in the prologue to the chronicle of Bohemia by Neplacho, Abbot of Opatovic, which is most affecting from the earnestness with which he prays for spiritual illumination[‡]. How well the cloister was guarded from this insidious enemy may be learned from the work of St. John of the Cross, on the obscure night of the soul; in which he alludes to "those novices who receive impressions of a secret pride from things holy and divine; judging others in their heart; being animated by a malignant spirit to good actions, in order to become more proud, eager to meet with persons who will praise them, and abhorring like death all who seem to regard them with indifference[§]."

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* Regula Min. xi.

St. Bonaventura shows that when monks hear other persons calumniated, they are to speak in their defence, and never to sanction such conversation[||]. "It is a thing full of peril," they say, with Peter of Blois, "to entertain any sinister suspicion against a man; therefore, the Apostle to the Romans says, 'Infirmum in fide assumite, non in disceptationibus cogitationum[¶].'" A certain Spanish nobleman drew on himself a letter of reproach from the Franciscan, Antonio de Guevara, for having, as the friar says, unbaptized a recent convert, pretending that he was a counterfeit. "Certes, seignior, you acted neither as a knight, nor a courtier, nor a Christian, in styling the other day Cidy Abdicarin "moor and miscreant." What, are you the God of whom the prophet says, 'Scrutans corda et renes?' to discover that this convert is not a true Christian? In all things external he appears as good a Christian as yourself; and be assured that God alone can determine who will be saved and who lost." This was enforcing the lesson taught by St. Jerome, who, when certain objectors were for fastening a sense to his words, which he disavowed, replied that he preferred the negligence of the old Christians to the obscure diligence of such censors *. The pacific atmosphere of monasteries was not favourable to the latter, as Abeillard found, happily for himself, when he was sent to make a retreat in the abbey of St. Medard, where the monks evinced such displeasure at the narrow jealousies of the half-learned, who were for detecting error in all his words; and at the present day one finds no where men more truly liberal and delicate in their judgment than in monasteries, where the desire ever is to give to all men honour, and to genius and merit of any kind, though in avowed adversaries, whatever praise may be its due. The monastic writings abound with instances of this liberality; but I shall only cite the single example of Sigebert of Metz, who in the tenth century was a light not only to monks but to all the clergy, who flocked to him from every side. "His memory is still sweet," says an historian, "to many who remember his wisdom. He was most dear, not only to the Christians but also to the Jews of that city, because he was able to distinguish the Hebraic truth from other additions; and to what they said according to the Hebraic truth he would always assent. Upon coming to Gemblou he freely instructed many, who came to him, of his elders and superiors in dignity. This prudent man, while of much gravity, was not of indiscreet austerity, but was to all, as things demanded, of discreet moderation; for the reading and meditation of the divine Scripture greatly occupied him; and yet the daily celebration of mass and devout prayer to God were his first concern †."

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[*] Wadding, tom. viii.

[†] In Ps. 148.

[‡] Ap. Pez, Rer. Aust. Script. 11.

[§] Lib. i. c. 2.

[||] Speculum Novitiorum, 32.

[¶] Epist. xlv.

The monks were accustomed to the hand, in the sense ascribed to the word mansuetus by St. Bernardine of Sienna; "accustomed to suffer, not rendering evil for evil." They had that mildness of heart in which he makes beatitude to consist, their maxim being always

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* Apol. Epist. xxx.

† De Gestis Abbat. Gembl. ap. Dacher. Spicileg. vi.

that of St. Augustine, "Melius est dubitare de occultis, quam litigare de incertis." St. Thomas says that this meekness prepares man for the knowledge of God, and, as Touron observes, "when he wrote those words he had had a long experience of their truth." Hear how the monk of St. Gall, Notker Balbulus, is described: "The meekest of men, in gentleness of spirit, and in peace of heart always walking *." One of the three Notkers of St. Gall being deficient in regard to this monastic feature, though one of the greatest men of his age, has nevertheless, in consequence, come down to us stigmatized with a reproachful epithet †. He had been seen angry. It is almost needless to add that the monastic meekness has always struck observers when they visited a convent. The same traveller I lately cited remarks, that in the manners of the monks of the Grande Chartreuse there was a mixture of dignity and humility which could not fail to interest. Mabillon says that he publishes the account of his travels in Germany, "non sine aliquo pudore;" adding, "Neque enim ii sumus, quorum facta vel itinera reipublicæ litterariæ scire intersit ‡;" and Trithemius apologises for writing his own life by saying, that "there are many things he has suffered, of which the memory can produce a contempt for the world and a desire of dissolution from this prison of the body §." In the monastic humility there was something mysterious, and no one could deceive or imitate it without possessing it. One evening St. Benedict was taking his repast, and a certain noble youth stood holding a candle before him. The saint knew that this youth secretly murmured, as if disdainful of such service; so he said to him, "Signa cor tuum frater, signa cor tuum:" then he ordered the light to be taken out of his hand, and desired him to sit down in peace ||. In general their whole style savours of men who, at the elevation, kiss the pavement of the church.

But it will be said perhaps, the monk after all, generally speaking, is not a learned man, a man of letters: he is not distinguished as an author or an orator. Probably not.

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* Eckerhard. Prol. in Vit. ejus.

† Piperis-Granum.

‡ Vet. Analect. iv.

§ Trithem. Nepiachus, ap. Eccard. Corp. Hist. Med. Ævi, 11.

|| Chron. Casinens.

But, without alluding here to the facts which demonstrate that the contrary was often true, let us take occasion to show how this very observation, which may seem to furnish ground for disdaining monks, ought to be turned to their praise. For, supposing that the type in general was that expressed by Villani, the historian, where he says "he was a man of good life and little knowledge," whether, because he receives no consolation of science but from God, will he remain without consolation and inglorious? Is it a small glory that he has the knowledge of truth and love, and the will to die for them [*]? You say he is ignorant of literature. Louis of Blois would not abandon his defence on that ground, but would reply, "Utilis satis est simplicitas, per quam melius conservatur humilitas." "It may be often doubted," says Cardan, "whether erudition conduces to happiness [†];" and as often whether it tends to promote wisdom or goodness. It is not knowledge that makes men happy; it is the quality, the subjective state of knowledge. "Knowledge and wisdom," says the poet, "far from being one, have ofttimes no connexion;" and it was an observation of the ancients that man might be *φιλόβιβλος μᾶλλον ἦ φιλόσοφος* [‡].

"A multifarious reading, tasted at the edge of the lips," says Wibald, Abbot of Corby, "pleases, but does not feed the mind. There is a certain avarice in science by which also our first parents were tempted. 'Eritis sicut dii, scientes bonum et malum.' Many things are learned, not that we may become better, but prouder [§]." "For the sake of guarding humility," says Ekkehard Minimus, Dean of St. Gaul, speaking of the monk of that abbey, Notker Balbulus, "though he was most learned and profound in science, he always applied more to the Psalter than to other books [||]." Many instances can show how well the monks were read to reason against reading. "The highest wisdom," says Peter of Blois, "is not to read Plato, nor to disengage the subtleties of Aristotle, but to love Christ, to serve Christ, and in this most grateful and fruitful service willingly, efficaciously, faithfully, and finally, to remain. Thus did and taught Paul; thus did and taught Bernard; of whose science you must be imitators, if you would share in their beatitude *." The Master of the Sentences speaks to the same effect, saying, "There are some things of which the knowledge does not bring, nor the ignorance prevent salvation; and perhaps ignorance of such things is no defect †."

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[*] Nieremberg, Doct. Ascet. iv. 7.

[†] De Sapientia, lib. ii.

[‡] Strabo, lib. xiii.

[§] Ap. Martene, Vet. Script. tom. ii.

[||] Lib. de Vit. B. Notkeri, 25. ap. Goldast. i. 11.

There is a peace resulting from science, a false peace, which the discipline of true peace would discountenance; such is the calm and self-content of those engaged in mere human sciences, without a divine direction; as when Ulysses came to the Syrens, who promised knowledge. Homer says, that immediately the winds ceased, and that there was a great calm, and that the demon pacified the waves ‡. Thus does he appease the workings of the troubled mind, by promising natural truth. But the monks knew that the true peace could only be found in that wisdom which is sanctification and redemption; following St. Paul, who knew nothing but Jesus Christ and him crucified; for all other wisdom without that they knew to be "inflation and perdition, a school of which they could not be disciples §."

Lupus, Abbot of Ferrers, gives a letter to a monk who was about to travel, in order that he may present it to those who might require his testimonials; in which, after begging that favour may be shown him, he adds this testimony, "For though he is ignorant of letters, the commandments of God, which he does not read in a book, he shows in his works, so as to merit from all with whom he converses not alone love but veneration ||." Now this is the type of the monastic character, when void of learning. Let us beg to be presented to some who realize it. "Here is our Gerard, then," says a monk of Cluny, "born, indeed, not of the most noble parents, and not so imbued with letters, but that there are many more learned than he; but I know no man of such faith. It is now thirty years since he built a small monastery in his native village, dedicating it to St. Mary of Charity, and being on the public way, no mortal passes by who, however he may dissemble, does not ex-

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* Sermo liii.

† Lib. iii. Dist. 15.

‡ xii. 167.

§ Pet. Bles. Serm. liii.

|| Lupi Epist. 107.

perience that Gregorean precept*, 'Quod hospites non solum sunt invitandi sed etiam trahendi†.'" "Lately," says Peter of Blois, "I saw a brother of the Carthusian order, Gerard by name, who above all things has desired to die for the last seven years, saying always with the prophet, 'Educ, Domine, de carcere animam meam.' His wish was to be dissolved and be with Christ. While we used to sleep, he passed the night in prayer and weeping, longing after eternal things; and though a laic and illiterate, he had written in his heart by the finger of God the science of life. He would answer concerning the articles of the Christian faith no less circumspectly than if he had spent a great part of his life in the schools of Paris. He was of a truth a condisciple of the Apostles, and of him who said, 'De excelso misit Dominus ignem in ossibus meis, et erudivit me.' Ah! how truly learned and wise was he! What did the windy loquacity of worldly philosophy profit Aristotle and his followers? Inflated with secular science, they knew not the God of Sabaoth. Let my wisdom and philosophy therefore be the philosophy of brother Gerard, who had nothing in his mouth and in his heart but Christ Jesus. Let my philosophy be the philosophy of Paul, who affirmed that he knew nothing but Christ Jesus, and Him crucified‡." Speaking of Father Euthyme, the Abbot of La Trappe says, "Although he had never studied nor received any tincture of letters, yet he had so solid a judgment and so quick a discernment, and God had given him so much grace and light, that he knew perfectly the whole depth and extent of his profession; and as he had a right heart and a right will, and as he loved Jesus Christ with an ardent love, so did He serve him for a guide. 'Lucerna pedibus meis verbum tuum§.'" Neither the wisdom, then, nor the goodness of monks were compromised by such deficiency. Goldast, in the dedication of his collection of old German historians, written by the monks of St. Gall, uses these remarkable words, "The materials are good, if the workmen should not be great artists, yet are they, I believe, excellent in piety, if less so in regard

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[*] Greg. Hom. 23 in Ev.

[†] Antiq. Consuet. Clun. Epist. Nuncupat.

[‡] Compend. in Job. c. v.

[§] Relations de la Mort de quelques Rel. ii. 152.

to letters; nor do I think that any one can be found so ignorant of all things, who would not study to be rather better than more learned from these books, to acquire good morals rather than elegance of diction, to correct vices rather than expressions. Truly we might desire in the words of Plautus a return of their ancient manners; but some one perhaps will exclaim, 'What manners? Do you desire monastic manners, which all these writers instil, who cannot even teach us to approximate to prudence? The Gods avert such madness!' If prudence be the ability which can by reason distinguish good from evil, truly such objectors, if they choose, may take examples from these writers. 'But they were abbots!' What then, has it escaped their observation, that in the whole action and administration of empire abbots flourished among the princes of the same empire *?"

Cardan himself, we may infer, would give the palm to monks rather than to the philosophers; for he says, "No one of these made men perfectly good, but the law of Christ alone makes men good †." And that, too, without other learning; when they are ready to say, "Let us be ignorant, and in nothing good, but graciously to know we are no better." "A pacific man," says the sage of cloisters, "is more useful than a learned man." And the same observation was made by the Father of the scholastic philosophy, St. Anselm, who says that "God often works more by the life of the illiterate seeking the things which are God's, than by the ability of the learned seeking the things which are their own ‡." On the other hand, we must not suffer the simplicity and humility of the religious to lead us into error, as to the extent of their attainments. We must remember that theirs was what Horace calls "the secret tracks of the deceiving life."

"Secretum iter et fallentis semita vitæ."

The poet calls "deceiving the world," the wise and happy life of those who live and die so obscurely that the world takes no notice of them. "Bene qui latuit,

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* Alemannic. Rer. Script. Ded.

† De Utilitate ex Advers. lib. ii. c. 14.

‡ Epist. lib. ii. 34.

bene vixit." But it does not follow that their secrecy was uninformed. Each monastery, like Rome at the present day, had its mute sages; for the maxim of the monks was, that "wisdom is of use to him who possesses it, even if it be hidden from others *." Cardan, surrounded with monks, found that the name of philosophy was sacred; but they had taught him this lesson, that "the thing necessary was not publicly to profess, but to show one's self wise, and not so much in studies as in actions; not to wish to overturn laws, to seduce the people, to contend with the ignorant, to take glory by teaching, but to be wise in secret, to lie hidden, and to trust in just deeds †." Monks, when obliged by charity to express their sense, spoke not that their hearer should bear a good opinion of their knowledge, neither did they labour for a greater esteem than might in some measure draw a belief from him to do himself good, and not to grace them. Petrus Sutorus shows that the Carthusians do not even desire canonization, all their labour and intention being to become holy in the sight of God ‡. Wadding observes that the seniors of the Franciscan family cared for nothing less than for gaining renown by the deeds of their predecessors §: and Touron complains of the extreme negligence in all ages of the Dominicans to collect and transmit to posterity what would have conferred honour on their order ||. See how careless monks were of fame. In the eighth century, in France, Prince Charles, surnamed Tudides, had for his confessor a monk of Corby, named Martin, who encouraged him to make a holy death. Mabillon complains that in the annals of the Francs he is only designated by these words, "Anno DCCXXVI. Martinus mortuus est;" and Adrian Valesius condemns this negligence and security of the Benedictine annalists, who seem to have supposed that posterity could divine what they meant. Mabillon, in the course of his elaborate researches, made the discovery of this Martin from an ancient manuscript in the library of an abbey, in which he read as follows: "Anno DCCXXVI. Martinus mortuus est. Fuit autem Monachus

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* Pet. Sutorus, De Vita Carthusiana, ii. 11. 4.

† De Utilitate ex Advers. Cap. lib. ii. c. 14.

‡ De Vita Carthus. ii. i. iii. 6.

§ Epist. ad Lector.

|| Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. de S. D. I. Præf.

in Corbeïa, vir vitæ continentissimæ et adprimè eruditus, quem Karolus Dux in summa veneratione habuit, et peccata sua ei confitebatur[*]."

The supposition that men can be philosophers without being authors, seems inadmissible to our men of letters, who, if they had been contemporaries with Pilate, would not have left him the monopoly of writing in the days of the Church's greatest sorrow: but they should recollect that Pythagoras wrote nothing; for it was from memory that Lysis and Archippus composed a sum of his philosophy after his death; that Thales probably wrote nothing, and that Socrates never committed his thoughts to writing: which facts are remarked by St. Augustin, in answer to the Pagans, when they objected that Christ had not written. "Authors are defective, like all artists," says Novalis, "and only more stubborn than others. Among authors by profession there are few liberal men, especially when they have no other subsistence but their writing[†]." Cardan, who had deep thoughts, seemed sometimes ashamed of having been an author; for he says, "After supper such a hatred seized me of my own books, as well as of others, that I cannot bear to think of them or to behold them[‡]." Monks were not always authors; but their intelligence was able to divine and feel the force of the old Spanish maxim, that truths finespun, in retailing of which so much of authorship consists, are fooleries. They were not always men of genius; but when they were, they knew that the good lives of their less able brethren evinced the best genius. They were not like the sentimentalists, who write so fervently on æsthetics or the poetic beauties of religion, without ever imagining that it should influence their daily actions; for to their genius one might apply the words of St. Gregory, where, speaking of the love of God, he says, "Quanto ea valentius attollitur ad summa, tanto potentius recurrit ad ima." Still less did the monks correspond with the idea of high intellectual merit, when the talent of display before the public is made to be its criterion. St. Jerome defines a philosopher as "an animal that feeds on glory[§]." This was not the type of monks; for an everlasting life rather than an everlasting memory was what they sought, as Sulpicius Severus says, "Non scribendo aut pugnando vel philosophando, sed pie, sancte, religioseque vivendo *." There was much in them, however, that would have pleased the shepherd king, who sent back the messenger to tell his countrymen that Cyrus despised the threats of men who had a public place in their city set apart for the purpose of false swearing and mutual deceit. "The inhabitants of cloisters," says Hugo of St. Victor, "investigate the judgments of the Lord, not secular judgments. They keep the law of the Lord by living, meditating, and loving. In that law there are two witnesses heard, life and conscience, two judges, meditation and science, two counsellors, the love of our neighbour and the love of God †." They had nothing to do therefore with the hustings, or what, in the babble of some now, is called "the platform;" or with the savage buffooneries of men who think that no one can know any thing of philosophy without having dined at a London tavern. "They were to love," as Hugo of St. Victor says, "not the decrees of assemblies, but the secrets of mysteries; to meditate, not the Decretals, but the Psalms; and the monk who spoke much disgraced his sacred habit ‡." If one of the poor monks of England at the time of the dissolution had been drawn from his cell to appear before a public assembly, he might have apologised in the ironical words of Socrates, begging his countrymen to excuse his utter want of experience and art, saying that he had lived to the age of more than seventy years without having ever appeared there before. "Therefore my manner will be unskilful, and that of a foreigner. So then excuse me as if on the ground of my being a stranger and foreigner, if I speak in the tone and manner to which I have grown familiar §." We may describe the contrast in this respect between the monks and the sophists of these latter days in the very words of Plato. "Our hooded men, whose time has been spent in the study of wisdom, when led before public tribunals, are sure, as Socrates says, to excite laughter; while, on the other hand, those who have been occupied from youth in

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[*] Præfat. in III. Sæc. Ben. 8.

[†] Schriften, ii. 222.

[‡] De Vita Propria, 52.

[§] Epist. 92.

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* De Vit. B. Mart. Prolog.

† De Claustro Animæ, lib. ii. c. 17.

‡ De Claust. An. ii. 17.

§ Apolog. Socr. 18.

public pleadings and such affairs seem to contract a manner and character most opposite to that of persons who have been bred to philosophy. They have never been accustomed to discourse at leisure or in peace upon any questions. They always speak in a hurry; for they know there are limits in time, which they must not transgress; and they plead before a despotic power, whatever may be its form, and often concerning life and death; so that from all these causes they are vehement and acrimonious, knowing how to flatter and deceive that power, and having narrow and false souls; for servitude deprives them from youth of enlarged views, and straightforward integrity and generosity, compelling them to do many things by crooked ways, involving their tender minds in great dangers and terrors, which being unable to meet with justice and truth, they turn to lying and to retaliating injury for injury, bending and twisting many things, so that they grow up to manhood, having no soundness in their minds, but being clever and wise, as they suppose. As for the monks, bred to philosophy, all is different. In the first place, from youth they do not know the way to the courts of council or judgment, or to any public assembling place of the city. They neither see nor hear any of the laws or decrees, but as for parties of society or festive meetings, dinners and banquets, with music, they do not know in a dream how such things pass. Whether, also, any one has done any thing well or ill in the city, or whether injury has been done to any one, whether man or woman, by his ancestors, *μᾶλλον αὐτὸν λέληθεν ἢ οἱ τῆς ϑαλάττης λεγόμενοι χόες*, and of all this they know nothing; since it is not for the sake of gaining reputation that they are ignorant, but because their minds esteeming all these things little, and as it were as nothing, are borne aloft above the earth and occupied in the contemplation of the universal essence of things, to the utter neglect of such matters. Therefore when forced to appear before a public assembly they appear deficient and absurd; for amidst reproaches they have nothing personal with which to reproach any one, as not being acquainted with evil from never having paid attention to it. Being wanting in this, they will be laughed at; and moreover, looking upon every thing in another point of view from that which the multitude takes, they cannot fail to be despised. Property, parentage, power, all are estimated by them in relation to the whole of things[*]." Pardon this abstraction then in the monks, as lovers of wisdom, and be not surprised that they, coming from their cloisters, should be thus diverted by their souls to look and move always upwards. For this was to be expected of them. Do you think it strange if coming from the divine visions to the evils of men they should appear weak and dim of sight before they have become sufficiently familiar with the present darkness, being compelled to contend concerning the shadows of justice or its images, and to discourse of them before men who had never themselves seen justice? Certainly this would not be strange; for the eyes are obscured by two transitions, when they are directed from light to darkness, as well as from darkness to light[†]." Such was the abstraction of the spiritual ascetic as described by Louis of Blois, who learns to leave all things for the love of God; who possesses nothing with a tenacious affection of heart; who adheres to no visible and perishable thing, to no mortal creature[‡]; who may say of himself in the poet's words,

> "I have not loved the world, nor the world me;
> I have not flatter'd its rank breath, nor bow'd
> To its idolatries a patient knee,—
> Nor coin'd my cheek to smiles,—nor cried aloud
> In worship of an echo; in the crowd
> They could not deem me one of such; I stood
> Among them, but not of them; in a shroud
> Of thoughts, which were not their thoughts."

Such was the ignorance of public and political affairs of the monks, who were expressly forbidden to crave for news, which became old and then known to them. "Be not curious," says St. Bonaventura, "to hear news of what passes in the world, which may distract your soul, diminish your devotion, and consume your time[§]." So the monk in Spenser makes this reply—

> "Ah, my dear son, how should, alas! a poor old
> Man that lives in hidden cell, bidding his beades
> All day for his trespass, tell tydings of war
> And worldly trouble[||]."

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[*] Theætetus.

[†] De Repub. vii.

[‡] Instit. Spirit. ii.

[§] De Reformat. Hom. Exter. 26.

[||] i. 1.

"To purity of heart," the monks were told, "conduce solitude, silence, study, prayers, meditation, and the wish to know nothing respecting the state of the world, 'quia sæpe plus nocent mala audita quam bona quæ sunt in libris lecta [*].' Hence when certain persons came one day to the cell of the Abbot Stephen, and knocked at the door, the old man was unwilling to receive them, and contrived to withdraw into the desert without their seeing him, not returning till he knew that they were gone [†]." St. Benedict had charged monks who return from a journey not to bring back with them rumours, which always cause some distraction. In fine, obedience to their rule disqualified them for contending with men. They could not employ ridicule, falsehood, or the zeal of retaliation. They could have no chance, unless under the peculiar circumstances created by divine faith. Hermippus says that Demosthenes, when a youth, used to hear Plato, but that one day as he went to him, seeing a great crowd, he asked what it meant, and was told that it was hastening to hear Callistratus, an orator, and that having turned aside to hear him, he was so pleased, that he ceased to follow Plato, and thenceforth attached himself to the rhetorician [‡]. There is therefore nothing wholly new in the choice so often made in later times, when men prefer the sophist to the monk.

From these observations, however, we must not conclude that the type of the monastic character, even when without learning, was deficient on the side of intellectual cultivation. "Sermo datur multis, animi sapientia paucis," said St. Columbkill [§]. This last the mute unlettered monks might claim. When monks were not great readers, they might themselves be read; and as Fenelon says, it is better to be a good living book than to love good books [||]. One might study them as an old clasped volume, to imitate their style, and to treasure up their observations; for from their replies on various occasions much true wisdom might be often learned. Thus the historian of the monastery of Villers relates different sayings of Walter, the tenth abbot of that house, which had been diligently marked by the brethren [*].

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[*] Thom. à Kemp. de Discip. Claust.

[†] Sophron. Pratum Spirituale, c. lii.

[‡] Aul. Gel. iii. 13.

[§] Carmen Monost. ap. Canis. Lect. Antiq. i.

[||] Epit. 22.

"What does it avail," says St. Augustin, "to be occupied with continual study, reading the actions and writings of the saints, unless we imbibe their juice by masticating and ruminating, transmit them by glutination down to the depths of our heart, considering in them our own state, and endeavouring to imitate the deeds of those of whom we read [†]?" The monk, least learned, conversant with his breviary alone, may be said, like that hoary man the poet sings of,—

> "To have spent his live-long age
> In converse with the dead, who leave the stamp
> Of ever-burning thoughts on many a page
> When they are gone into the viewless damp
> Of graves:—his spirit thus became a lamp
> Of splendour, like to those on whom it fed."

Old age in the cloister is a theme not sufficiently familiar to any of us, though it is one on which poets and philosophers might discourse most sweetly. "When I was young," says Abbot John, "I used to go to the renowned old Fathers, to be blessed by them, and to be edified [‡]." Philosophers in the middle ages approved of this custom. "My fifth observation," says Cardan, "was that I should respect infinitely old men, and be much with them [§]." It was to cloisters that these deep thinkers repaired in search of them, where especially were old men who, like Cardan, had all their lives long been "deep observers; attentive to the admonitions of God; in prosperity, piously grateful; in adversity, remarking how every thing is for the best, at least to the universal order; and convinced that they were personally remembered by God in the extremest evils;—who, moreover, had always set great value on time, like himself, whether riding, eating, in bed, in watching, or in conversing; always meditating something, and laying up something [||]." There, too, old age has its honour, and, as it were, its festival, on the beautiful day of the Presentation of our Lord; when, as we read, he was acknowledged by Simeon,—"Sene famoso, annoso, probato, coronato," as

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[¶] C. v. ap. Martene, Thes. Anec. iii.

[†] Lib. de Scala. Parad. [‡] Sophronius, Prat. Spirit. c. 137.

[§] De Vita Propria. [||] Id. 23.

St. Augustin says *. As if it was not enough to have the testimony of angels and prophets, but that also that of old just men was required. Shall I cite witnesses to prove that in this respect monasteries were privileged places? Then hear one who knew the world well, and who exclaims,—

> " New love was this—old age with its grey hairs,
> And wrinkled legends of unworthy things,
> And icy sneers, is nought; it cannot dare
> To burst the chains which life for ever flings
> On the entangled soul's aspiring wings,
> So is it cold and cruel———."

"Ah! my good lord, esteem more your prudence than your old age," says the Friar Antonio de Guevara, writing to Don Alphonso Espinel; "for otherwise, if you begin to count your years, there will be always some one ready to count your vices." How many in the world come to old age, as Cephalus significantly says in Plato, verifying the ancient proverb, "being filled with all miseries and vain regrets!" But, as this wise and happy old man observes, it is through their own fault; for with all men of just lives *ἐν τῷ γήρᾳ πολλὴ εἰρήνη γίνεται καὶ ἐλευθερία.* When old age is miserable, there is one cause,—*οὐ τὸ γῆρας, ἀλλ' ὁ τρόπος τῶν ἀνθρώπων*; for, if they are orderly and cheerful, old age is but moderately troublesome or painful; but if not, O Socrates! then both old age and youth will prove difficult to such a person †. "Men do not live now to be as old as formerly," said Luther mournfully, as he felt himself drawing to his end. We have before remarked to what an advanced age the monastic discipline tended to preserve men. Independently of the peace resulting from it, which no doubt was a main cause, the expansion of heart produced by the majestic offices of the choir, and the habitual exercise of the intellectual faculties, which, as Alibert observes, "is singularly useful for the physical duration of our organs," explain the fact sufficiently; which is avowedly recognized by physicians, who remark constantly that among monks old men are generally found. One of these venerable Fathers, who had outlived three generations of men, must have appeared to a stranger and guest as did Nestor to Telemachus, when the youth said to him,—

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* Serm. 13. in Temp.

† De Repub. i.

> *ὥστε μοι ἀθάνατος ἰνδάλλεται εἰσοράασθαι* [*].

He must have been esteemed worthy of reverence, as in a true sense one of the immortals, already united with the infinite and eternal, a living witness fulfilling the prophetic song of the Church: "O mors, ero mors tua: morsus tuus ero, inferne." For, as far as regarded such men, there was in reality no such thing as death,—nay, we may add, no such thing as old age, in the unhappy sense of the word; though there was a most sweet and peaceful state provided,—different indeed from that of youth, but still lighted with a smile that recalled the bliss of Paradise. Their words could spell-bind the listener, as the tones of the secret bird whom the twilight wakens: for such old age commanded a religious veneration; since, as St. Clement of Alexandria observes, "in proportion as man approaches to his end, so much more is he deserving of honour, when, having God alone older than himself, he has more resemblance to Him who is styled in prophecy 'the Ancient of days [†].'" St. Jerome says, that in old men all other things decreasing, wisdom alone increases [‡]. The aged monk, comparing his age with his first years, could say of himself, in Homer's words,—

> ———————*ἤδη γὰρ νοέω καὶ οἶδα ἕκαστα*
> *ἐσθλά τε καὶ τὰ χέρεια· πάρος δ᾽ ἔτι νήπιος ἦα* [§].

Such old age, no one can doubt, exercised a great power. Even men of the external world were moved by it. "Its counsels," says a celebrated diplomatist, "do not wound, because it extinguishes rivalities; it shocks no self-love; and the impression which it wears of experience causes in others a diminution of confidence in their own judgment. Let us hope," he continues, "to preserve long the old men whom we still possess where we meet; they belong to times of which nothing else remains: their presence is a continual instruction; they tell us to take time in all affairs, and to appreciate all things without illusion. In their long career, all the sanctuaries of the human mind have been opened to them, and they have learned the science which estimates at their just value both the resistances of habit and the enterprises of the imagination." "I venture to recommend all younger members," says the learned Oliver, speaking of the society of Jesus, "to revere the hoary head, to court the company of those whose wisdom has been enriched by the experience of multiplied years. If this advice were better attended to, many interesting anecdotes, and points of valuable information, which elude the notice of general history, would often be perpetuated by tradition, and transferred to record *." Yes, when men repaired to abbeys in the ages of faith, it was not so much the antiquated slab or mouldering column that they sought out with inquiring eyes, as the hoary head,—the Father whose port and mien bore mark of many years, and within whose eyes were legible chronicles of untold ancientness, such as Dante had in view when saying,—

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[*] iii. 245.

[†] Pædagog. lib. iii. c. 3.

[‡] Ad Nepot. Epist.

[§] xx. 309.

"I saw an old man standing by my side
Alone, so worthy of rev'rence in his look,
That ne'er from son to father more was ow'd †."

"I have seen some monks," says St. John Climachus, "worthy of eternal memory, of an angelic aspect, hoary with venerable age, of profound innocence, and full of the simplicity of wisdom; not insipid or irrational, like the old men of this world, bland, meek, placid, joyful, nothing feigned in them, nothing negligent, nothing adulterated, in words or deeds ‡." Trithemius bears a similar testimony to the innocence and patience of the old learned monks in the Benedictine order §. It was in monasteries that men found "the heart which had grown old, but had corrupted not." It was there that they found the equal to that great Henry Dandolo, the Doge of Venice, in 1201, of whom we read, "Jam senex sed vir magnanimus ||." John de Monsterolio, secretary to Charles VI., describing his visit to the monastery of Caroliloci, near Senlis, says that the abbot, in the eightieth year of his age and the sixtieth of his profession, was erect and

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[*] Collections of the S. J. 154.
[†] Purg. i.
[‡] Scala Paradisi, iii.
[§] Chronic. Hirsaug.
[||] Chron. Aud. Dand. in Murat.

active as a young man, joyous and benign to every one, so that he was loved by all, proving the truth of Cicero's remark, that the vices which belong to many old men are of the men and not of old age; "though exempt from obligation himself, he says mass every day, sings in the choir, and differs from no one else in the community excepting that what others do from obligation he does through devotion *." Monastic peace not being exposed to perish when monks acquired power, superiors lived long, as may be witnessed in those of Cluny; of which St. Mayeul bore the abbatial crosier forty, St. Odilon his successor fifty-six, St. Hugo sixty, and Peter the Venerable thirty-five years,—each of whom, in turn, performed great things. What must have been the experience of such men! How much treasured up in their minds! In general, memory, without books, was a fruitful source of wisdom in the cloisters of the middle ages, as was to be expected,—at least according to the opinion of the ancients, who thought that its seat was in the heart, with the affections, which are in fact inseparable from mind; for which reason the Romans said "recordor," and called a wise man "cordatum;" whence also our expression came, "to learn by heart." The Abbot Ammonius had learned by heart both the Old and New Testament, as also a great part of the writings of St. Athanasius and St. Basil. Orderic Vitalis says that William, a monk of the abbey of Ouches, had learned by heart the Epistles of St. Paul, the Proverbs of Solomon, and many other treatises of Holy Scripture, which he employed in his daily discourse, to exhort those with whom he conversed †. Pope Paul IV. had learned the whole Bible by heart, as also the works of Galen; and Gregory III. could repeat the Psalter, without missing or misplacing a word ‡. Dominick de Mendoza, brother of Garsias de Loyaso, confessor of Charles V., and also a Dominican, had learned by heart all the Sum of St. Thomas, and had made an abridgement of it in verse to help his memory §. Stung by hearing of these examples, the profane scholars of the sixteenth century had recourse to strange methods in order to obtain results in the world similar to these in

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* Ap. Martene, Vet. Script. ii. 1390. † Lib. iii.

‡ Drexel. Auri Fodina.

§ Touron, Hist. des Hom. Ill. de l'Ord. S. D. iv. 26.

the cloister. Malumbra was said to have anointed himself with a certain ointment, which he thought could impart an artificial memory, but which drove him mad *. The memory of monks supplied indeed very different themes from that of such men, and seemed to verify the notion that its seat was in their heart: for they remembered best what most occupied it,—their faults, to lament them; the virtues of others, to extol them; the benefits they had received, to repay them; the divine mercy, to nourish hope; justice, to keep them watchful; and eternity, that they might never attach themselves to what passes away †.

When Hugo, Archbishop of Rouen, wrote his books in praise of memory, of "holy memory," as he styles it, he had in view the power of commemorating the whole scheme of the Catholic religion from the beginning of the world ‡. Lord William, the eleventh Abbot of Villers, was learned, we read, in the divine law; so that, in the chapter, he would produce before the community things new and old, exciting the hearts of his hearers to a love of the celestial country §. Halynardus, Abbot of St. Benign, made Archbishop of Lyons in 1015, used to read the books of the philosophers and those of secular wisdom, and whatever he found useful in them he used to treasure up in memory ||. It entered into the monastic character to regard as common to all whatever had been written by any author, and to make use of it without fearing the literary quarrels which have so often embittered the existence of mere secular scholars. Like Aristotle and Pliny, the monks were great makers of extracts from the books they read; a custom, to prove the utility of which, Drexelius devoted an entire volume. Pasquier need not have charged with ingratitude Ives de Chartres, for copying from Burchard without naming him, nor Burchard, for having borrowed from Isidore: for such plagiarism in the cloister was deemed innocent, by men who were dead to egotism. "We are like dwarfs mounted upon giants' shoulders," says Peter of Blois of himself; "by means of whose stature we can see farther

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* Annal. Camald. lib. lxviii. † Drexelius, Auri Fodina, iii.

‡ Tract. de Memoria, ap. Martene, tom. ix.

§ Hist. Monast. Villar. ap. Martene, Thes. Anec. iii.

|| Chronic. S. Ben. Divionensis, ap. Dacher. Spicil. i.

than they. The treatises of the ancients we render more elegant, by suppressing what has become obsolete; and we give new life, as it were, to their books which, through the neglect of men, had become as dead *."

But what, above all, distinguished the men whose disposition was formed by the laws and spirit of the religious orders, was the unity of their character, the consistency of their manners with their doctrine, or, in other words, the fidelity of their lives to the vocation of God. "Magna res est unum hominem agere," says Seneca. Nothing, in fact, as De Maister after citing him observes, is so difficult as to be always only one man,—without inconsistencies, and without self-contradictions. Where can this be found in the world? "The truth is," says a keen observer, who quite looks through the deeds of men, "there is not in the Chamber," meaning the French Parliament, "a single deputy of any opinion who is consistent †." Perhaps, if this Timon were to travel northwards, he would not have a better account to give of those who compose other assemblies, though guarded by every privilege excepting that of moral dignity. But if he were to pursue similar investigations into the character of men cloistered in a religious house, his testimony would be very different: for the monk was what he desired to find,—a man, consistent, collected, always one, the same unalterable friend and disciple of his divine Master. He looked at each action of his own life as other men regarded the deeds described in books, and applied his religion to daily practice: according to what St. Thomas says, "Conscience is nothing else but an application of knowledge to a certain action ‡." The monk was serious and in earnest. St. Odon, awakening in the night which followed his ordination, and seeing for the first time the stole suspended to his neck, began to weep §. "Unity is good; plurality, evil," says Cardan: "for if the good be perfect, it leaves nothing without itself; but when there are many things, one is not in another, and therefore goodness cannot be absolute ||." The one thing was ever in the mind of monks, and hence the simplicity of their goodness. As is said of St. Hugo,

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* Epist. 92.

† Timon, Etudes sur les Orat.

‡ Q. xix. 5.

§ S. Od. Vit. lib. i. n. 37.

|| Liber de Uno.

the sixth Abbot of Cluny, "On their tongue there was no arrogance, no word of vanity; but all holiness, and all that bespoke the monk *." Their conversation, like their books, was perfumed with the fragrance of the desert; for they carried with them that interior solitude of the mind, which the ascetics said was more necessary than that of the body. Hence, too, that tone of Christian dignity, which is so remarkable in the writings of Suger, and of men like him. "I have resolved to take no notice of your insults," writes Antonio de Guevara to an Italian nobleman, "esteeming more my profession than the blood from which I descend; being convinced, that, after my death I shall not be asked whether I have lived as a knight, but whether I have lived as a Christian." And to another correspondent, who inquired respecting certain local antiquities, he replies, "Being a monk, it would be more fitting for me to inquire respecting the time that my order was founded, and the country to which the glorious St. Francis belonged, than to know when the Carthaginians entered Spain, or the Romans took Carthage." Thus they never forgot themselves. As we read of the blessed Hartmann, "whoever looked on them, as in a mirror might learn easily, by comparing them with other men, what was pleasing and what displeasing to the eternal King †." Such have I found the meek Italian friar, whose head inclines profoundly each time that the name of St. Francis is pronounced. In his hood he carries devout prints, to distribute as he walks along; he has a picture for one, a smile and some gracious word for another: though in company with the profane, thinking no evil, diffusing charity by his very looks, simple as a child, recollected as an angel: for he does all things in a spirit of prayer. When the pious priest found St. Benedict in his cave at Subiaco, the hermit was surprised to see a man come to him; but, before he would enter into conversation with him, he desired that they might pray together. They then discoursed for some time on God and heavenly things. Such is the ceremonial still in use in the holy courts of monasteries. What dignified consistency in these sages of the cloister adhering so firmly to God's service, and showing forth Christ in liveliest portraiture! After once seeing them,

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* Biblioth. Clun. 415. † Ap. Pez. Script. Rer. Aust. i.

it is easy to detect the counterfeit who goes forth to preach. "Who is this man," asks Cardan, "that writes words 'De paupertate toleranda?' It is he who, in less than four years of friendship with Nero, has heaped up by usury, through all Italy, and by the testaments of widows, seven million five hundred thousand gold crowns*!" When monks preached on such subjects, there was no danger of any one being at their side to make computations of this kind. They taught nothing but what they had long practised, and hence the sound of truth was mighty on their lips; for, as St. Columban said,

"Doctor erit magnus factis qui quod docet implet."

Monks, devoted to religion by their holy profession, are bound, says S. Bonaventura, "to live only of Jesus Christ and for Jesus Christ†."

But how shall we describe what the ascetic terms their "stupendous familiarity with Jesus?" Whenever these true friends spoke of him, their soul seemed to dilate beyond her proper self. We read of St. John of the Cross, that on entering a monastery one day, and passing before a certain picture of Christ, he was moved by it to such a degree, that he seemed in a rapture to those who observed him ‡. "I speak of what I have seen," says a Franciscan, "for there is a good friar, whose memory is greatly honoured throughout Italy, who could not say a page of his breviary without being in a ravishment, and I could repeat thousands of similar examples of ecstasy from our chronicles §." The monk who conducted me through the library of Vallombrosa, could not point to a print of our divine Saviour in the sepulchre, without kissing it, and saying, "It is to Him we owe salvation." His look, while stedfastly he pored upon the view, and withal his tone of voice, which I can never forget, more impressive than a thousand words, formed a fine comment on the line of St. Columban,

"Optimus est animus Christi vestitus amore."

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* Hier. Card. de Util. ex Advers. Cap. i. 1.

† De Script. Grad. Vit. Spirit. c. 82.

‡ Dosithée, vii.

§ Le Sacre Mont. d'Olivet.

In all these instances, the soul being disengaged through ardour of affection from the body, had no need of a voice loudly speaking to guide her; but as the ancient philosopher says, "the smallest impulse acted upon her, as a great ship is easily turned by the least inclination of a narrow rudder." "I believe," says Peter of Blois, "that the poor in spirit is he who, distrustful of himself, and denying himself for Christ, has nothing in his thoughts or memory, nothing in delectation or desire, but Christ *." Then we should have included this history in our first book; for such were the monks. Three old men came to Abbot Stephen to speak about what was useful for the soul; but he was silent. They asked him, "Will you make no reply, father, to us who came here for utility?" "Pardon me," he replied, "all I have I will show to you. Day and night I behold nothing but our Lord Jesus Christ hanging from the wood." The old man then departed †.

What St. Dominick recommended most to his friars, was to "speak always with God, or of God." They had no need of a long manuscript to aid them in the pulpit. When brother Thomasuccius, a Franciscan, went from Italy on pilgrimage to St. James of Compostello, he took nothing with him but a staff and seven ears of corn in his hand, to contemplate in them the seven gifts of the Holy Ghost ‡.

Speaking of brother Euthyme, the Abbot De Rancy says, "he was so familiar with the Holy Scriptures, and had made such just and spiritual applications, that every one who approached him was consoled; and nothing has so fully convinced me that the science of the saints, or rather of God, is not learned by books, but that it is only God who can infuse it into the heart, as when I saw this poor monk, who had acquired with so little study such pure and exalted wisdom." This holy man says that Dom Bazile observed with the strictest constancy the precept of the apostle, "If any one speak, let it be as if God was speaking by his mouth." Of Dom Bernard he says, "one never observed in him an action, word, or movement, which had not Jesus Christ for its principle, its rule, and its end;" of another monk, "as for me, I

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* Serm. xlii.

† Sophron. Prat. Spir. c. 64.

‡ Wadding, An. Min. ix.

feel bound to declare, as a testimony I owe to truth, that during the five years he has passed with us, I have never seen him commit an action that was not conformable to our holy laws;" and of Dom Ephrem, "I counted him rather an angel than a man *."

"Semper in ore tuo resonent bona verba salutis."

The monks to the letter followed this precept of St. Columban †, and what a charm did its fulfilment impart to their sacred character! To use the Platonic language, one might have asked how was it that such simple men, who seemed unable to speak or give an opinion on common subjects, should in an instant become so eloquent and profound, appearing to waken up from sleep when there was made mention of our Lord? The reason was, because their inspiration and dependence was from Him, in the same manner as Socrates says that the faculty of the poet was from Homer. So when the melody of his sacred name sounded in their ears, immediately they awoke up, and their soul danced, and they found the words flowing to them in abundance; for not by art or learning did they deliver what they uttered concerning Christ, but by a divine power enabling them to proclaim his praises: while as for any thing else they paid no regard to it; so when any one mentioned the adorable name, they had no want of words, though they would be at a loss with regard to other subjects. "When once Jesus is named," says Peter of Blois, "all names of antiquity become wearisome to me. Most sweetly sounds the name of Jesus, that new name, the name of Him who said, 'Behold I make all things new ‡.'"

Thus they made no pretensions to proficiency in any art, though, as the ascetic says, "Magna ars est, scire cum Jesu conversari:" nor was it on learning that they depended. Their mission was to keep alive on earth the sacred fire of divine love, and to form some intermediate link in the chain of spirits, not as from a personal choice teaching wisdom, but as godlike men, divine, pouring forth what they received of his free bounty, who

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* Relat. de la Mort de quelques Rel. de La Trappe.

† Carm. Monast. ap. Canis. Lect. a. 1.

‡ Serm. vi.

had made them apt for ministry so high. Still, to pursue the parallel in Plato, methinks Apollodorus would reserve his ears for them, as he did for his old master. "When I hear others," he would say, "especially your smooth, polite, or money-making men discourse upon such topics, I have compassion on them, because they think they do something when they are doing nothing." His language would be the same still; he would be disposed to criticise himself and every one, but those who become the true representatives of wisdom*. And indeed, after becoming acquainted with a Bernard or a Francis, or any from the tribe of lowly ones that traced their steps, whose marvellous lives deservedly were sung in heights empyreal, can we wonder at such predilection?

Thomas de Celano concludes his portrait of the seraphic father in these words: "His raiment was rough, his sleep short, his hand liberal. As he was the humblest of men, he was sweetness itself to every one, accommodating himself to the manners of each; amongst the pious, the most pious; among sinners, like one of themselves." What would it have been to have followed this blessed man, or any of those who resembled him through life? To have marked how sung, how combatted these beautiful souls? how wandered upon earth, before mounting to Heaven, these noble Christian intelligences? If since the time of the apostles, the Saviour has found any who have followed all the traces of his steps, who have fulfilled all his wishes, and attached themselves to Him with all the force and ardour of their souls, beyond all doubt or question these were the men.

The picture which Pope Clement VIII. gives of religious men when sending Carmelite missionaries to the King of Persia, is a portrait of monks by a master's hand. "Do not be arrested," said the Pontiff, "by their simple and rough habit; because if you consider their life and manners, you will discern that there are under this vile and penitential raiment, certain admirable virtues which are hidden, and certain rare talents which make them agreeable to God and man. Do not attend either to their feet which are defiled with dust and mud, as is inevitable with pilgrims who make long journeys, but consider the gravity of their discourse, and the sweetness of their conversation, and you will arrive at this conclusion, that they have souls void of the least stains, and that their hearts are purified from the infection of the things of this world. You will in fine admire the internal beauty of those who come to announce to you, with all imaginable blessings, peace."

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* Plato, Conviv.

CHAPTER XV.

But in what useful employment did the monks engage, and what service did they render to the world? For there are many who will still persevere repeating that the monk was not fit for any thing, as the author of Margites says,

> Τὸν δ' οὔτ' ἄρ σκαπτῆρα θεοὶ θέσαν, οὔτ' ἀροτῆρα,
> Οὔτ' ἄλλως τι σοφόν.

Not to speak again of their literary labour, so prodigious, that a recent historian observes, "it would put to shame much of our self-complaisance, and that, in point of fact, these calumniated communities did more for literature than any ecclesiastical body of the present day *." Let us observe whether the advocates of monks might not meet their opponents even on their own most favoured ground, and demonstrate that by rights the palm belongs to them there also.

"For the friends of this world," says St. Augustin, "there is nothing more laborious than not to labour." Cardan makes the same remark, and says, "They who seem to be the most prudent, find this one rest for evils, namely, the being occupied perpetually with business, so as to leave no time for thought †. Similarly for them nothing is more tumultuous than retirement. "Solitude," says Cowley, "can be well fitted and set right but upon a very few persons." Even Petrarch, writing from the country, remarks that he is not quali-

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* Cyclop. iv. 316.

† De Utilit. ex Adver. lib. i. 4.

fied to enjoy its peace. "I have been long free, happy, and master of my time; but I feel at present that liberty and leisure are only for souls of consummate virtue. Alas! that is not my state. Nothing is more dangerous for a heart subject to the passions than to be free, unoccupied, and alone;" and nothing more difficult, he might have added. For see to what interminable labours are the lives of passionate men devoted! what activity in them to the last! Calvin was more ardent in this respect than Voltaire himself. Besides the ten folio volumes that are printed, he left in manuscript wherewithal to form thirty more of the same contents; every page of which breathes restlessness, and impatience, and ardour for change. "They who are carnal men," says Richard of St. Victor, "that is, occupied with the desire of worldly things, have labour; but the good, because they neither love nor desire these things, escape and fly away from these afflictions; for from cupidity, which is the root of all evil, that labour arises, but by the renovation of the Holy Spirit the soul acquires wings and liberty [*]."

Thus then we at once come to the conclusion that what some wished to be the crime of monks is all turned to their praise: since it was a proof of goodness that they could have rest; that they could enjoy solitude; that they could devote themselves to contemplation, and spend their time in the idleness of the wise and virtuous, in sweet and sacred peace. The epithet *ἀπράγμονα* was used in praise of a person by the Greeks [†]. What, in fact, becomes of that contemplation of abstract truth, in which they so much delighted, where the whole life is engrossed with business? Pliny quotes the saying of Attilius, "Satius est otiosum esse quam nihil agere [‡];" which the monks might repeat in defence of their leisure when vilified by men of secular action. "We shall speak at leisure to those who are at leisure," says Richard of St. Victor [§]. Happy times when great men could say that; but now all must be said and done in haste: for, since monasteries were destroyed, it is impossible to find any one of intellectual worth who has leisure to sit and converse with either young or old; or if such a person should exist, the influence of monasteries having been withdrawn, there are not even men who have time to listen to him. He is left alone, and may sit like a sparrow on the housetop.

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[*] In Cantica Cantic. 15.

[†] Thucyd. ii. 40.

[‡] Epist. lib. i. 9.

[§] De Contemplatione, i. v. 19.

Again, when you have abolished monasteries, what becomes of contemplation in a religious sense? of that free perspicacity of mind, as Richard of St. Victor defines it, which is occupied with admiration on the spectacle of wisdom *? "Honours," says Cardan, "when we are compelled to give our ears to salutations, steal time, and prevent the study of wisdom, than which nothing more divine can be found in man †." How many have been spoiled by the honours paid to them in drawing-rooms, and stript of all the fruits that their first years promised, when they were uncourted by the frivolous and only loved by good men for their "poetic meditations!" "External occupation," as St. Thomas observes, "may hinder the contemplation of wisdom;" and St. Bernard draws the conclusion in reference to the monastic leisure. Now these views are not to be immediately abandoned at the call of manufacturers, and of the writers who extol the consequences of their industry. These new teachers must first disprove the axiom of St. Thomas, "that beatitude consists in the operation more of the speculative than of the practical intelligence ‡." A great deal of occupation is similarly destructive of prayer, even of that which is mental; for the thoughts of men so engaged have no leisure for any subject but that of their business. Sheer idleness itself is not more opposed to the object of a spiritual life. The monks, therefore, required leisure, and sought to imitate in that respect the angels, of whom St. Gregory says, "Non sic foris exeunt ut internæ contemplationis gaudiis priventur." But like them they did go forth; and St. Augustin thus describes their twofold operations: "The charity of truth seeks holy leisure, and the necessity of charity accepts just business; but if no one impose that burden on it, they should hold themselves free and at leisure to perceive and behold truth; if it be imposed, it must be accepted for the necessity of charity, yet not so as altogether to desert the sweetness of truth, lest that necessity should become an

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* Allegor. Tabernac. Fœd.

† De Vita Propria.

‡ Quæst. iii. art. v.

oppression*." St. Thomas uses nearly the same words†. But Richard of St. Victor shows that without retreat not even the active virtues can be brought to perfection. "For he who indiscreetly desires to benefit others, and pours out before the time, remains," he says, "always poor and void of grace, having impeded his own progress and done less good to others. The prudent soul, therefore, does not wish to be called away from the quiet and silence in which it studies justice, because the worship of justice requires silence, until that worship comes to fruit and maturity; whereas others who are imperfect and carnal affect discipline before the time, and are more actuated by passion than by the instinct of utility ‡."

From these few observations it is easy to perceive the fatuity of those who speak evil of the leisure which the monks enjoyed. We read that the sons of Sophocles accused him of neglecting his family affairs when he deserted the care of the house for the sake of writing tragedies; but that the Areopagites absolved him: and assuredly the monks who neglected no duties to enjoy the same facility for intellectual labour must expect a similar sentence wherever wisdom is their judge. Speaking of the designs of God in requiring the service of contemplative souls, St. Gregory says, "That those who have made a great progress in virtue ought not to despise the lives of their superiors when they see them unemployed in external things §." It does not follow that they are therefore idle men. St. Bernard, to those who affirmed that a life of contemplation was a lazy life, thought it sufficient to reply, "Otiosum non est vacare Deo, sed negotium negotiorum omnium." Admirable sentence! with which the voice even of the ancient philosophy agrees. "The reward of wisdom," says the Pythagoræan, "is not to be despised by men; for as the poets sing, that those of justice await men in Hades, so those of the understanding will be obtained in the islands of the happy. It is not grievous therefore if, for the present, wisdom should appear to be useless and good for nothing. For it should be chosen not on account of utility but for its own sake, because it is good. And as we ascend to the top of Olympus merely to enjoy the view from thence, without regard to any thing else, for that spectacle is worth more than great riches, in like manner the contemplation of universal nature is to be preferred to all the things which seem useful [*]." The monks, I am aware, would not have sought to defend themselves by citing such testimony. "I read of the question of Martha," says Hugo of St. Victor, "but I do not read of Mary's reply. Nevertheless, I read that Christ answered for her: from which answer prelates might learn somewhat [†]."

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* De Civ. Dei, xix. 19.
† ii. 2. Q. 185.
‡ In Cantic. Cantic.
§ Hom. xv.

But it is not necessary to take such high ground when meeting those who charge the monks with idleness. What land is not full of their labours? What city does not contain some memorial of their activity?

Quæ regio in terris nostri non plena laboris?

How often might the traveller, through countries now spiritually desolate, have repeated this exclamation of Æneas on finding wherever he went representations not indeed of battles and heroes, at sight of which the Trojan stood still and wept, but of the peaceful triumphs of religious men? Like that Virgilian wanderer let us feed our mind with an empty picture, and bathe our cheeks with tears, while alluding to the labours which deserved eternal gratitude, the very thought of which renders those who are too blind to pay that debt objects of an immense pity. "The monks were founders of cities, and true fathers of their respective countries. They built beautiful edifices and bridges, hospitals and colleges; they made roads, plantations, drainages, and above all—they made a happy people [‡]." Hear how St. Paulinus, Bishop of Nola, in his epistle to Victricius, Bishop of Rouen, describes the labours of the Benedictine order in Belgium in that early age: "And now in that land, at the extremity of the world, which the roaring ocean beats with boisterous waves, to the people of these remote nations who were sitting in darkness, on the sandy way of the sea beyond Jordan, has arisen a joyful light from the Lord, and they have laid aside their rough hearts on the entrance of Christ. Where lately barbarous strangers or native robbers frequented deserts of forests and shores equally as dangerous, now venerable and angelic choirs of saints in cities, towns, islands, and woods, celebrate the divine praises in churches and monasteries with a numerous people *." In fact, the missionary labours alone of the monks demonstrate that they were not men who sought peace by idleness. In the seventh century the holy children of St. Benedict spread the light of faith through the benighted region of Europe. Andomar, and Amand, and Columban, in Gaul; Augustin, Wilfrid, and Cuthbert, in England; Kilian, Rudpert, and subsequently Boniface, in Germany; Fructuosus and Hildefonso in Spain instituted vast communities of saints. Anschar, the apostle of the north, was a monk of Corby. He, with one companion, went in 826 to the confines of the Danes, where, not content with the success, though so prodigious, which crowned his own labours, he instituted seminaries for future missionaries †. At the prayer of St. Stephen, King of Hungary, and Bareson, King of Sardinia, Desiderius, Abbot of Mount Cassino, sent monks from that abbey to evangelize their respective states ‡. In the tenth century twelve monks proceeded thence to Poland, where they established themselves in Calvo Monte, in the diocese of Cracow. In the same age Giles of Tusculum went also as a missionary to Poland. Thus, without alluding to the Oriental missions undertaken by the Mendicant orders, in later times, here was sufficient proof that monks were not unprofitable labourers. Their journeys, described in great detail in the chronicles of their respective houses, are deeply interesting. When St. Otho with his companions, so late as in 1150, proceeded from Poland to preach the Gospel in Pomerania, the difficulties they underwent may give some idea of the labours which then belonged to such an office. Entering the vast and horrible forest which divided those two countries, they had to make their way through pathless wilds and marshes, exposed to danger from serpents and monsters of diverse kinds, while the cranes, which had nests in the trees, harassed them continually by their clamorous cry. After six days they came to the banks of the river which formed the boun-

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[*] Jamblich. Adhortat. ad Phil. cap. 9.

[†] De Claustro Anim. ii. 21.

[‡] Rubichon.

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* Bolland, Jan. 16.

† Mab. Præf. in iv. sæc. ii. 5.

‡ Hist. Cassinens. vi.

dary, and there they first saw the pagans. Not knowing the disposition of their chief, the horror of the solitude, the black density of the forest from which they had immerged, the shades of approaching night, and the cruel aspect of the barbarians, caused them no small dismay *. Of their style of preaching on these occasions we can judge from many curious monuments. The sermon of St. Gall, preached at Constance in 615, conveys in brief space an excellent epitome of the whole history of man, and of the scheme of God in creation. This one short sermon forms an abstract of the whole Bible composed in the very words of the sacred text †. Nor are we left in ignorance of the purity of intention which was required in these monastic enterprises. "The brethren who, by Divine inspiration, wish to go to the Saracens and other infidels," says the rule of the Minors, "must obtain leave from their superiors;" and Louis of Paris supplies this commentary, "They must not go through lightness of mind or cunning to avoid regular discipline, or from a desire to see the world, but they must go, inspired by the Holy Ghost, from a zeal to gain souls, and content to suffer even to the effusion of their blood for the glory of Jesus Christ ‡." But the difficulty of my present task is not to point out the labours of the monks, it is only to know how to convey some faint idea of their multiplicity and extent. There is one ministry to which some orders were expressly devoted, of which I must relinquish the attempt to speak in despair. Such was the office of redeeming captives. The pages which describe it in the monastic writings are so delightful that I should fear to trust myself with any citations, lest this chapter might swell into a book. Only let the reader refer to the travels of the monks of the order of the Holy Trinity, whose provinces in our own three kingdoms were once so flourishing as to require a separate history, and he will wonder that such long tract of ages should have constantly seen angels pass. There he will find a description of the adventures and sufferings of the captives, often deeply affecting, as in the instance of the Countess de Bourk and her daughters; there he will read of the

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* De S. Ottone Pom. Apostol. lib. i. ap. Canis. Lect. Antiq. iii.

† Ap. Id. tom. i.

‡ Expos. Lit. de la Règle des FF. Mineurs, 12.

barbarity of the infidels, and the characteristics of their tyranny; of the zealous and devoted exertions of the fathers of the redemption; of their travels and escapes; of their institutions of charity in the Ottoman empire; the history of the monks who served them from their first vocation to the death which closed their heroic self-devotion; of the return of others with the captives whom they had delivered; of their general processions through Spain, and Italy, and France, leading back thus to their respective homes in solemn triumph the christians whom they had redeemed, some of whom had been slaves from boyhood to a great age. There he will read the long catalogue of these redeemed slaves, the order of their progress, and of the transports and charity of the population through which they passed *.

Another labour of these ministers of love to which I can only allude in passing, was the service which they rendered to the people in times of public calamity. We met with instances in the seventh Book. They come before us everywhere. What tombs are these in the chapel of St. Lambert on the left bank of the Aisne? They cover what was mortal of two monks of St. Leger and a Franciscan friar, who fell victims while serving the sick during the pestilence at Soissons in the reign of Louis XIV †. Observe how the physician Berniers speaks of the Franciscans, and Minims, and Capuchins in Blois, and of their heroic services rendered to the inhabitants during the pestilence in 1631. "Of the latter, father Vincent de Nevers alone escaped the danger: and he performed the office of magistrate, physician, and pastor ‡." The continuator of Nangis, speaking of the plague in 1348, says, "that in many cities and other places the secular priests left the task of assisting the people to some courageous monks and nuns, who, rejecting the fear of death, in their sweetness and humility, used to touch and handle them. Renewed often by death," he adds, "they repose, we believe, in the peace of Christ §."

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* Les PP. Comelin, De la Motte, et Bernard. Voyage pour la Redemption des Captifs, Paris, 1721. Busnot, Hist. du Règne de Mouley Ismael, roy de Maroc. Rouen, 1731.

† Martin, Hist. de Soissons, ii. 588. ‡ Hist. de Blois, 68.

§ Contin. G. de Nang. 110.

But these, it is true, were not the universal and constant employment of the monks. Let us then see whether, apart from the particular vocations of some orders and from the services of others, on occasions of a peculiar nature, the monastic life in general can be justly designated as an idle and unprofitable existence. Truly there must be much ignorance or courage in those who bring such an accusation against it. If the term "stationary period," in an evil sense, is to be applied to the middle ages, assuredly the monks were not in fault; for their maxims were those proclaimed by St. Bernard to the abbots assembled at Soissons, when he said, "Non est stare omnino in pendulo fragilis scalæ, neque in incerto hujus mortalis vitæ quicquam in eodem statu permanet. Aut ascendas necesse est, aut descendas. Si attentas stare, ruas necesse est *." Was it idleness to pray and devote one's self to God's service; to give the world an example of detachment and of virtue; to cultivate deserts; to till and embellish lands reputed uninhabitable; to create resources for thousands of families; to teach youth gratuitously; to extend all kinds of succour through the country; to undertake and complete immense works; to offer a retreat to repentance, a refuge to misfortune and to innocence; to exercise a sweet and affectionate hospitality; to satisfy the spiritual and temporal wants of an abandoned population? Could a life that implied such labours be deemed idle, though it was stigmatized as something infamous by the preachers of the new religion who desolated Europe in the sixteenth century †? "The monks," says an old historian of Durham who knew them well, "were always virtuously occupied and never idle, but either writing of good and godly works, or studying the holy Scriptures ‡." Dom Bonnet, in order to labour with more assiduity at his great work, the Biblia Maxima Patrum, abdicated the dignity of prior which he held in the Abbey of St. Germer de Flei, and retired to that of St. Ouen in Rouen §. Gillebert of Holland, the abbot who continued the sermons of St. Bernard on the Song of Solomon, expressly commended the labour of those who committed their own

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* Epist. xci. † De Haller, Hist. de Réforme Prot. en Suisse.

‡ The Ancient Rites, &c. of Durham, 137.

§ Biblioth. Hist. de la Cong. de S. Maur. 41.

thoughts to writing, on the principle that it was good to give motion to the waters [*].

Thomas à Kempis, speaking of the advantages of a monastery, says, "There it is permitted to no one to be idle, but to every one is appointed a measure of appropriate work [†]." "Different arts," says Duns Scotus, "are multiplied on account of their limitations in respect to different artists, or diverse agencies in form in respect to diverse effects in species [‡]." The monks seem to have received as oracular the line of St. Columbkill,

"Semper amanda quidem est rerum doctrina bonarum [§]."

"There are so many occupations in the Carthusian life," says its historian, "that even the unlearned can scarcely find time for doing all that is to be done [||]." An abbot could hardly be an idle man, when, like St. Peter the Venerable, he had not time for answering the letter of such a correspondent as St. Bernard. "The multiplicity of affairs," says that holy abbot to him, "obliged me to put off writing first for one day, then for several days, then for a month, finally for a whole year; and now at length with great difficulty I find an opportunity for writing [¶]." Of Lambert, Abbot of Lobes, we read, "Concerning the assiduity and devotion of his prayers, the grace of compunction which he evinced, the constancy of his reading to which he applied himself not only at home, but even when travelling on horseback, or lodging on the road, the sparingness of his food and clothing, the love which he cherished for the word of God and for the science of the Scriptures, to the study and collation of which he applied himself whenever he had opportunity, the fervour of his love for God and his neighbour, which he exercised in worthy works, it would be difficult to treat sufficiently. At his death the image of our Lord's cross was before his eyes, for in that he placed all his hope of redemption. His constant words, even in his agony, were, 'Multa flagella peccatoribus;

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[*] Mabil. Tract. de Studiis Monasticis, i. cap. x.

[†] Sermonum, p. 1, 2.

[‡] De Rerum Principio, i. 1.

[§] Carm. Monost. ap. Canis. Lect. Antiq. i.

[||] Pet. Sutorus de Vita Carthus. lib. ii. t. ii. c. 4.

[¶] S. Bernard, epist. 229.

sperantem autem in Domino misericordia circumdabit*.'" "Halynardus, Abbot of St. Benign, at Dijon, in the tenth century, was so diligent, that he used to carry a book in his hand even on a journey†."

Thus was verified in monasteries the remark of Cowley, that "the first minister of state has not so much business in public as a wise man has in private: and that if the one has little leisure to be alone, the other has still less to be in company." Hear how conscious of this fact were the men who founded and inhabited them. Saba the monk, and as he styles himself, the unworthy Abbot of St. Salvator de Scholari, speaks as follows in his testament. "Being a scholastic, I considered these things deeply, and because I, an humble sinner, am created out of nothing by God, and decorated with his image, and because Jesus Christ delivered himself up for us, I, inflamed with divine zeal, and neglecting all earthly things, have chosen the monastic life, and offered myself to Jesus Christ, for I knew that I could not otherwise pay Him unless I committed the remainder of my life to Him, and served Him: therefore going from the city to a certain place of my possessions near the river, called Bordonari, like another Abraham, I made my dwelling there, leaving the world, my neighbours, and friends. Wishing also to divide my substance fraternally among my children, I did so by God's help; for having assembled them all, I judged that the eldest should have his part, and the others the rest of what I possessed in Sicily and Calabria, whether fields, vineyards, gardens, mills, houses, vassals, and mountains in the territory of Messana and Palermo, and besides horses and mares, cows and oxen, sheep, asses, men-servants and maid-servants, with their sons and daughters. All these I divided amongst my sons justly. Therefore in the name of Jesus Christ our Saviour I built a beautiful church, in which I placed all my legitimate property, moveable and immoveable, with 300 beautiful manuscripts; and I walled the place round, and built cells, and ornamented it as much as I could; in which house I cut off my hair, and put on the habit of monastic life, and I am called Saba, and I live with other monks in the usual manner of monks, praying and seeking alms from God, not idling, nor fearing labours nor death, since it is not corruption of life, but a change to another greater and eternal life; for precious in the sight of God is the death of his saints *."

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* Fulcuinus de Gest. Abb. Lobiens. ap. Dacher. Spicileg. vi.

† Chronic. S. Ben. ap. Dacher. Spicileg. i.

The Benedictine monks penetrated into the vast deserts of Germany, which are designated as the Black Forest. There they built monasteries, cut down trees, and renewed the face of the ground, breaking down rocks, and cultivating the land, so that by degrees this holy colony in the woods gave birth to noble towns and great cities. Walafrid Strabo says, that St. Gall "found the place on his arrival subject to frequent inundations, terrible through its asperity, and nourishing amidst precipitous mountains and winding valleys many wild and raging beasts; for besides stags and herds of harmless animals, there were many bears, and innumerable boars and wolves of singular ferocity †."

"In the fifth and sixth centuries," as Staudenmaier observes, "the monks who were not employed in preaching tilled the ground, and converted deserts into fruitful fields. Where there had been only wastes and barbarous Pagans, men saw gardens, meadows, and corn lands, as if a new created world, and also great towns. Posterity," he adds, "has ungratefully repaid them, having no eyes for that which can be accomplished by a life that is spent in prayer, labour, and contemplation ‡."

In the tenth century, Aligernus, Abbot of Mount Cassino, built the towns of Janula, St. Angelo, Terrucculus, Cervarius, Vandra, and others, which he fortified with walls, besides erecting several detached towers and castles for the defence of the country §.

Down to late times the Benedictines of the Abbey of Badia, near Florence, which was founded in the tenth century by Count Hugo, Marquis of Tuscany, son of the Countess Villa, and Albert, Marquis of Spoleto, have rendered important service to the country by the encouragement which they have given to the cultivation of the Apennines. In general, of all the great works of the middle ages that would now be termed national, the

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* Ap. Sicilia Sacra, ii. 1004.

† Gerbert, Hist. Nigræ Silvæ, tom. i. 44.

‡ Johan Scotus und die Wissenschaft Seiner Zeit. i. 73.

§ Hist. Cassinens. sæc. v.

monks were the agents; and hence many abbots, like Bernard Inveges, of the monastery of St. Martin de Scalis, at Palermo, have won from the people the title of fathers of their country *. It appears that the abbots of Croyland had been so long accustomed to undertake and preserve the embankments in the fens, to prevent inundations, that on a certain occasion, in the reign of Henry VI., when the floods bore them down, and, aided by a strong north wind, laid the whole parish of Whapplode under water, some chief men of the fens, thinking that the abbot had perhaps neglected the necessary precautions, instituted a process against him, as if he had been bound by law to secure the banks. The result of the trial in the king's courts was the dismissal of the charge, on the ground, as the judges declared, of there being no legal obligation to oblige him, although the abbots had always been in habits of repairing and making embankments, solely through charity, for the safety of the country and the benefit of the people of our lord the king †.

Egelricus, of the monastery of Durham, in the reign of Edward the Confessor, at a great expense, made a solid road of wood and sand pressed down through the middle of that vast forest and profound marsh of Depyng as far as Spaldyng; a prodigious work, says the old historian, called from him Elricherode, and for which all the English midlanders and Saxons blessed his name ‡.

A vast number of the parish churches in the county of Somerset were rebuilt or repaired by Richard Beere, Abbot of Glastonbury, in the fifteenth century, the initials of whose name may be discovered on the walls. It was a poor monk of Einsiedlin, at the suggestion of his Abbot Geron, in the twelfth century, who threw that daring bridge over the river Sylle, to which the name of the Devil's Bridge has been given, to indicate the difficulty of its construction §. In all curious and useful works monks took the lead every where. Those of the abbey of Cork were the first to erect a salmon weir in that country. In the fourteenth century the abbot and monks of Hauterive contributed so much to the great work of surrounding the city of Freybourg with walls,

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* Sicilia Sacra, ii. 1080.

† Hist. Croylandensis, Rer. Ang. Script. i.

‡ Id.

§ Chronique d'Einsid. 27.

that the magistrates returned them solemn thanks, with a declaration that they had followed solely their own free will through zealous love. Such were the fruits of the monastic industry on great occasions; and its usual direction day by day was no less profitable, as will appear from observing the services rendered by the monks in their capacity of rural proprietors. Monks are continually styled agriculturists in the old chronicles. William of Jumiège uses the terms as synonymous *.

"We cannot shut our eyes to the fact," says a recent historian, "that for improvement in agriculture the Germanic empire was indebted to the monks. In whatever place these extraordinary men were located they soon showed what could be effected by willing minds, still further influenced by the sacred obligations of duty. From incontestable evidence we know that luxuriant meadows were soon made to start up from the fens, and ample harvests to wave on the sandy plain or the black mountain †."

The monk might make the innocent boast of one of Virgil's farmers, and say,

> "Possum multa tibi veterum præcepta referre;
> Ni refugis, tenuesque piget cognoscere curas ‡."

It is recorded of St. Ansegisus, Abbot of Fontanelle, in the ninth century, that "he was most sagacious in the precepts of agricultural matters; so that there never was wanting to him an abundant supply of the various fruits of the earth, which he always gave with a liberal hand to all who were in want §." Similarly we read in the old life of blessed Stephen, Abbot of Obazine, in the country of Limoges, that "nothing of rural exercise was unknown to him, and that there was no agricultural or rustic art which he was not qualified to teach and exercise better than other men ||." At Pierri, a village near Epernay, there was a Benedictine monastery, in which Dom Périgoon made some celebrated experiments, which proved successful in bringing the art of making wine to perfection ¶. It is a remark by Le Grand d'Aussy, that

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* vii. 23.

† Dunham, Hist. of German Empire, ii. 78.

‡ Georg. i. 176.

§ Mab. Acta S. Ord. Ben. sæc. iv. p. 1.

|| Ap. Baluze, Miscell. 1.

¶ Monteil, Hist. des Français, iv. 469.

in later times the proprietors of vines, through greediness of gain, have neglected the cultivation of the best for others that bring more, but a worse produce. The monks attended to this work themselves, and did not leave it to ignorant cultivators.

In the time of St. Filibert there were rich vineyards on the territories of the Abbey of Jumièges, where now there are none. In the time of Duke Richard II. the monastery of Fécamp had vines; and in the beginning of the thirteenth century some of the wine of the Abbey of Bec used to be sent to Philip Augustus; and Corby had also its vineyards: none of which places now produce wine *. Ildefons von Arx, in his history of the Abbey of St. Gall, remarks in like manner, that, since the days of the monks, the avarice of the proprietors of vineyards has caused a deterioration in the quality of wine †.

The idea of cloistral Bucolics conveying rural observations in verse was not unknown to the monks. Perhaps we might gather much from the Hortulus of Walafrid Strabo and the peaceful eclogues of the monk Metellus, who, in the twelfth century, wrote them in his monastery of Tegernsee ‡, which is a house embosomed in the Alps in Upper Bavaria. The subjects of his ten eclogues, in imitation of Virgil, are the cattle and pastures of the monastery. The piety and simplicity of these productions would at least charm those who love to repeat the religious maxim of Virgil's goatherds,

> "Ab Jove principium, musæ; Jovis omnia plena :
> Ille colit terras; illi mea carmina curæ."

In the monastic Georgics might be found many curious rules for conjecturing the weather from the flight of birds, the habits of animals, and the aspect of the heavens. The monastic shepherd tells us that in every flock there should be one sheep wearing bells, which, if the weather is to be fine, will be the first to leave the fold, and if the contrary, the last; that if the starlings fly from a tree all together, there will be cold weather; if one by one, rain; and that as a general rule we may remember this line,

> "Rouge vespre et blanc matin font esjouyr le pelerin."

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* Id. tom. iii. 32.

† ii. 630.

‡ Ecloga Quirinalium, ap. Canisii Lect. Antiq. iii.

"The meteorological observations of the monks," says one who is not their friend, "are interesting to determine the maxima and minima of temperature, and to attest the periodical return of certain phenomena. Making the necessary corrections in the calendar, we find from them at certain epochs that storms occur [*]." What curious notes of this kind were written by Angelus de Nuce, the 136th Abbot of Mount Cassino, to illustrate the chronicle of that house by Leo of Ostia and Peter the deacon. In the Chronicon Lamberti parvi a Reinero Monacho continuatum we find a complete journal of the seasons [†]. In the annals of Corby in Saxony peculiarities in the habits of storks and wild geese are incidentally noted; for after relating that in 974 a fire began in the stable, the monk adds that it was soon extinguished, the storks giving notice of it in the middle of the night, by their glotterating much. Again, in 1141, he mentions that some wild geese on their passage sat on the roof of the church and fought together [‡]. In another history we read, that, on the thirteenth of August, 1620, a vast flock of no fewer than fifty storks were seen from the monastery of Plass in Bohemia, near which they rested all night [§]. The monks were fond of making observations of this kind, which must have rendered them in one respect at least well qualified to compose Georgics. During a short walk round their monastery, they could point out some things that are now perhaps known but to a few; for they had many latent Watertons and Audubons amongst them, at whose predominant propensity the good Fathers smiled. But we must not loiter here with them, watching the birds and the sky. The words of Petrarch will direct us to survey other fruits of the monastic industry; for, after exclaiming, "Oh, peaceful and celestial life, O life better than all lives, life susceptive only of good, where salvation is expected, and the sweet yoke of the Lord borne in silence and rest; life that repairs the soul, repairs the affections, reconciles men to God, and that saves innumerable men from ruin," he adds, "life favourable to genius, disdainful of the body, the mother of nobility, the nurse of virtue, the mountain of contemplation,—and what shall I say, unless that thou art all things together—a life most happy and proper for every good work; a life for philosophers, for poets, for saints, for prophets *."

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[*] Libri Hist. des Sciences Mathem. en Italie, ii. 235.

[†] Ap. Martene, Vet. Script. v.

[‡] Ap. Leibnitz, Script. Brunsv. iii.

[§] Gasp. Jongel. Notit. Abb. Ord. Cister. v. 8.

Such was the conviction of men in ages of faith, which every observation of the fruits of monastic life justified; for monks were poets, painters, and musicians of excellence, so great as not to let the tongues even of their foes be idle in their praise. In entering under the sweet shade of the cloister the Christian offered to God whatever peculiar talent he had received from Him. Before the altar all the brethren resembled each other by prayer, but on returning to their cells the prism was decomposed, and each expressed after his own manner a ray of the divine beauty †.

After our late walk then in the fields with our hooded guide, let us follow him from cell to cell, to visit brethren who delight in labours of this latter kind. We have seen practical men, busy men, ardent to conceive great works, indefatigable to perform them; let us pass to the contemplatists, and we shall find that neither were they idle or inactive in their sphere of usefulness; for poetry, painting, and music are useful as well as delightful labours to men of good will.

"In 999, say the annals of Corby in Saxony, Meynholt shone in various literature; for he was a theologian, a philosopher, a musician, a poet, a good master of the school, an eloquent orator, and a devout monk, quam pulcrum hoc septenarium!" After this they have only two words for their domestic calamity, adding, "Corby is burnt ‡." It would be long to tell how many poets wore the cowl. In the abbey of Reichenau we find Walafrid Strabo celebrated for his poems on the life of the monks Mamma and Blaitnaic, on the visions of Wetten, and also for his Georgics and Epistles. In the abbey of St. Victor in Paris we find Leoninus, from whom the Leonine verses derived their name; who composed a poem in twelve books upon the Bible, and whose Epistles to the Popes Adrian IV. and Alexander are

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* Lib. ii. De Vita Solitaria, Tractat. ii. cap. ix.

† Lacordaire sur l'ordre des Frères Prêcheurs.

‡ Ap. Leibnitz, Script. Brunsv. iii.

versified. In the monastery of Cluny we find another poet, who thus sings of himself,

> "Hugues de Bercy qui tant a
> Cherché le siècle ça et là,
> Qu'il a veu que tout ne vaut rien,
> Presche ore de faire bien *."

Dom Morillon, who acquired great reputation for his French poems, wore the Benedictine cowl in an abbey of the congregation of St. Maur. In the monastery of St. Gall were many poets. Konrad the Abbot is cited, with Counts Kraft of Toggenburg, and Werner of Homburg, even among the Minnesingers.

Rapertus, in a solemn poem, described the life and manners of St. Magnus, as evincing the graces of the eight beatitudes. He also composed many songs and hymns; and, for the use of the people, a canticle on St. Gall, in German. This was the author of that curious history of the abbey, carried on after his death in 897 by others, which is one of the most important books for the study of the middle ages. Tutilo, his companion and devoted friend, who could preach in both Greek and Latin fluently, was also a poet, some of whose hymns and songs are extant. Waltram, the librarian of the abbey, and confessor of the blessed Wiborad, wrote also many hymns and elegies ; as did Notker Balbulus, that meek and holy monk of the race of Charlemagne, whose proses and melodies were so celebrated. Hirmann, son of the Count of Veringen, surnamed "Contractus," from a weakness in his limbs, who is said to have prayed that he might have science of the Scriptures rather than soundness of body, was another monk of this abbey celebrated for his poetic genius. He it was, as Trithemius says, who composed the "Salve Regina."

In English cloisters many poets wore the cowl. In the abbey of Dunstable we find the monk and poet, Robert ; in that of St. Alban, Hanwill ; and another hooded man, whose name is unknown ; in that of Circenster, Neckham, who was abbot there ; in that of Bury, Lydgate ; in that of Whitby, the elder Caedmon, a cowled poet, of whom Bede makes mention thus : "In

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* Pasquier, Recherches de la France, vii. 3.

this monastery," saith he, "there was a certain monk remarkable for the divine grace which enabled him to compose songs to the encouragement of devotion; so whatever he learned he could turn into poetic words and metre of exceeding sweetness, in his native tongue,—the English. By his songs the minds of many have learned to despise the world, and to glow with the love of heavenly things. None were able to contend with him in making verses; for he learned his art, not from men, nor by men, but received it as a gift from above. While in his secular habit, until of mature age, he learned nothing of the art. Indeed he had no taste for it: for sometimes, at a festive entertainment, where for the sake of hilarity the harp was brought in, and all were required to sing in their turn, he used to rise up, leave the table, and return home, withdrawing from the hall of feasting to look after the cattle in the stable. It was one night, in a dream, after retiring in this manner, that a man appeared to him, and enjoined him to sing on the creation; and, having received this command, he began immediately to sing verses in praise of God the Creator which he had never heard before." Bede then gives the sense; adding, however, that it is not possible to translate his songs into Latin, or any other language, without injuring their elegance or majesty. "The next morning he proceeded to the sheriff of the place, related the gift which he had received; and all persons who heard his songs and verses agreed that it was a gift from heaven. The abbess, therefore, admiring the grace of God within him, persuaded him to exchange the secular for the monastic habit, and ordered that he should be instructed in Holy Scripture. He sung on the creation of the world; on the departure of Israel from Egypt; on the incarnation, passion, resurrection, and ascension of our Lord; the descent of the Holy Ghost; the preaching of the apostles; and many were his songs on the terrible judgment to come, on the horrible pains of hell, and on the pleasures of the celestial kingdom. To these he added many other strains on the divine mercy and judgment; in all of which he endeavoured to withdraw men from the power of evil, and to allure them to the love and practice of good deeds: for he was a man truly religious, humbly observing the regular discipline, and filled with a holy zeal against those whom he saw remiss; wherefore a suitable end crowned his life *."

In the Italian monasteries perhaps still more frequently hooded poets sung. Thus, at Mantua, in the Carmelite convent, we find Baptist; and in Camaldoli, Ugolino Verino, whose poem, in three parts, on hell, purgatory, and paradise, was praised by Petrus Delphinus, prior-general of the order †. But, above all, in the Franciscan convents were men who held the muses dear; and who, even when they had them not on their lips, held them in their minds. Brother Pacific, whose conversion was ascribed to his having beheld the seraphic father in a miraculous vision in the town of St. Severin, in the marshes of Ancona, which caused him immediately to renounce the world, was a most celebrated poet, who had been a courtier of the Emperor Frederic II., who, with his own hand, had given him a laurel-crown, entitling him the "Prince of Poets." The poetic genius of Jacoponus, and of St. Francis himself, we have before had occasion to remark. I shall only observe here, in conclusion, that the seraphic love which breathes through their compositions is expressed in the most noble and harmonious words. In the convent of Celano lived Brother Thomas de Celano, who wrote the life of the Seraphic Father, and the Prose of the Dead ‡, compositions which might justify our assertion that the monasteries of the middle ages contained men who—if their genius had been so directed—might each have held the tragic throne, like another Æschylus. They have a great majesty of ancient language, says Geoffroy Tory, in his book, "Du Champ Flori;" and although Jean le Maire makes no mention of them, he nevertheless borrowed from them the greatest part of his treasures: "not a little praise, adds Stephen Pasquier; for Jean le Maire, in his illustrations of Gaul, has adorned our language with many fine traits; and if he borrowed these from them, trust me they were not bad masters in their art §."

In many of these monastic poems are fine ancient words, of which some have been lost through negligence, and others changed to worse by our ignorance. Their conceptions of the art, too, as we before remarked of

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* Bede, Hist. lib. iv. c. 24.

† Annal. Cam. lib. lxviii.

‡ Annal. Min. ix.

§ Recherches de la France, vii. 3.

Catholic poets generally, were just and noble. Their muse was not a howling spectre which shakes its bones against the crannies of the tomb; but a smiling angel, pointing to the skies. Above all, their deep religious spirit sheds a delicious peace around them. Canisius quotes Marcus Velserus, who says that the ancient poems of the holy monks of St. Gall can draw tears, when we compare that ancient piety with the spirit of our times *, to whose admired poets one may apply the words of one who saw their Fathers,—

> " 'Tis hard to say, whether for sacrilege
> The rhyming fiend is sent into these men;
> But they are almost visibly possess'd."

The monks were sufficiently quick to take alarm when poets, even in the world, assumed a less religious style. John, of the monastery of St. Mary of the Angels, at Florence, wrote to Angelo Corbinello, to recal him from reading the Gentile poets; but the reply which was addressed to him by Colucio Salutati expressed views which had been long adopted and sanctioned by religious men. "Venerable brother in Christ," said this poet, who deserved to be extolled as a just man by St. Antoninus, "do not so austerely recal me from honest studies. Think not that when truth is sought in poets, or in other books of the Gentiles, one cannot walk in the way of the Lord: for all truth is from God, or rather is of God. He is truth, as he witnesseth by his Son, the Mediator of God and Man; and not merely truth, but all truth. Whatever is sought elsewhere but in Him is vain and foolish. There can be no truth out of God; so that he who seeks truth of any kind seeks God, who is its plenitude. Do not then reprove your brother because he seeks truth among poems: for no kind of speech has more affinity to the Divine words, and more connection with the Deity, than the language of poets, as may be witnessed in David, Job, and Jeremiah. Do not object to me the reproof given to St. Jerome, for he was especially ordained to the work of translating the Scriptures; and that reproof was not given to Augustin, nor to any one else before or since Jerome. Be assured that while I read those fabulous things, and admire the beauty

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* Lect. Antiq. ii.

of the language, I distinguish the falsehood from truth, and always return thanks to God. Farewell, and pray for me [*]." In fact, at this very time, Colucio Salutati was corresponding in poetic epistles with another monk of the same monastery,—Zenobio of Tantino; who, in many sonnets, contended with him in teaching the way of heavenly life [†].

The monks indeed, as the sons of peace, could not but favour an art which was so calculated to soothe and tranquillize the human mind under all its vicissitudes. "It is good," says a great living observer of society in France, "that there should be some voices of poets, to rise between the furious parties which tear each other to pieces; to inspire some compassion, if not remorse, in the soul of these pitiless oppressors." Such too doubtless was the conviction of St. Columbkill, when he interfered in behalf of the threatened bards of Ireland, who were then about to be suppressed; on which occasion he prevailed so far as to obtain permission for them to continue to exercise their art, under certain limitations. Truly it was in the interest of peace, and of all who loved it, that there should be some who would have no other ambition but to excel in song,—who, in their capacity of poets at least, could consort with poverty and retain contentment; whose desires and wants would interfere with no passions of other men; who would demand no other possessions but the spectacle of the universe; who would turn their fellow-countrymen from loving wars and wrangling, to the innocent delight inspired by the aspect of the meadows and the fountains and the groves,—to that true philosophy, in short, which so few attain, but to which all men should aspire.

From the monastic poets let us turn to the musicians in the cloister: and these were many, as old chronicles attest. Indeed, here their science took its rise; for the first trace of the use of musical notes is found in the abbey of Corby, in Saxony, in the year 945 [‡]. Alfanus, a monk of Mount Cassino, is mentioned as having been eminent in this noble art, which was esteemed in close alliance with philosophy [§]. In the abbey of St. Gall,

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[*] Annal. Cam. lib. lvii.

[†] Id. lib. lvi.

[‡] Hock. Gerbert. und sein Jahrhundert.

[§] Chron. S. Monast. Casinens. lib. iii. 7.

Notker, Ratpert, and Tutilo, who were of one heart and one soul, though of most dissimilar natures, were all three musicians, most learned and holy men Notker, in body, not mind, was weak; in voice, not spirit, defective; in divine things, elevated; in adversity, patient; to all, mild, timid; in prayer, reading, and dictating, most eminent; and, to sum up all in one word, a vessel of the Holy Ghost. Tutilo was a strong, active, athletic man, fit for every kind of work: he had a clear voice; and an elegant form: he was an admirable painter; and, besides other instruments, most skilled in playing on flutes and pipes, so that he used to teach the sons of nobles how to play upon the flute. A great builder was he, as well as a famous preacher in both tongues: alike good for hours of mirth and seriousness; so that King Conrad used to swear in jest at him, for having made a man of such a nature a monk. Besides all this, he was strenuous in choir; full of tears in secret; expert at composing verses and melodies; and chaste as a disciple of Marcellus. Ratpertus held a middle place between both. He was a master of the school from youth; a clear and benevolent teacher, rarely putting his foot out of the cloister; a strict disciplinarian, calling death an excursion, and Tutilo a wanderer, to admonish him to be sedulous in the school *.

In the ninth and tenth centuries the monks of St. Gall generally were great musicians, whose compositions were celebrated far and near. No musical piece at the present day, of the most eminent composer, is heard with greater ecstasy than was inspired by a composition sung at Mayence on Easter-day, in presence of King Conrad I. and all his court, by a monk of St. Gall, who was a professor there, and by two bishops who had been his pupils. The king, the queen, and the king's sister, called him to them, took off their rings, and put them on his finger, to signify an admiration which they could not express by words. Musical science had been first brought to St. Gall from Rome, by a Roman musician, singer of the pope, who instructed the monks through gratitude for their gracious and hospitable treatment during a sickness which he had caught on his journey to Germany, having

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* Eckehard de Casibus S. Galli, c. 3.

been brought by Charlemagne to Metz from Rome, to found his musical school there *.

Some of the musical manuscripts of St. Gall are still extant. In that abbey every monk seems to have been inspired with the same taste; so that we find even Notker the Physician, maternal uncle to the Abbot Notker, cited as being admirably skilled in music. Down to late times music continued to be cultivated in the religious houses, and in a spirit conformable to that of the great modern musician, Zingarelli, who, whenever he was about to compose, used, as a preparation, to read some treatise by one of the Holy Fathers.

Theophilus Macchetto, a Venetian monk of Camaldoli, in the abbey of St. Michael at Pisa, was celebrated no less as a musician than as a mathematician and historian. He had learned music from Horatio Tardito, a famous master in the abbey of Classe at Ravenna. After consulting all the musical works in the Vatican and other great libraries, he studied attentively the manuscript on music of Franc of Cologne, and then published his Curiositates Musicales †.

Painting was another art in which many monks were sedulously employed; and the beneficial influence of the cloister appears very manifest in the peculiar graces of the school which they formed within it. In the ninth and tenth centuries, the monks of St. Gall were not less eminent as painters than as poets and musicians. Tutilo not only painted well, but he also was skilled in forming great metal vases, which he used to adorn with images and verses and epigrams. As an artist he was renowned all over Germany, as far as Metz. There are extant still the carved cover of a book of the Gospels, and images of the Blessed Virgin and of St. Gall, wrought by his hand ‡. Many other monks of this abbey were celebrated sculptors and painters in miniature. Notker the Physician painted admirably, and adorned many books, and also the church of the abbey. John was drawn from St. Gall to Aix-la-Chapelle by the Emperor Otho III., in order to paint an oratory there. In the abbey of Tagernsee, also, in Bavaria, about the time of the crusades, there was a

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* Eckehard in Cas. 4 Id. Minimus, in Vit. S. Notkeri, Monach. Sangall. de Gest. C. M.

† Annal. Camald. lib. lxxix.

‡ Ildefons von Arx, i. 100.

school of painting, as well as of learning, and of all the arts that belonged to an asylum of peace.

In the eleventh century Heldric, Abbot of St. Germain of Auxerre, and Adelard, Abbot of St. Tron, were celebrated as painters in miniature. The monk Thiemon, after painting in many convents, became Archbishop of Salzbourg. About the year 985, in the abbey of St. Florent of Saumur, the monks used to manufacture tapestry, adorned with flowers and animals. The Camaldules of the monastery of St. Mary of the Angels in Florence had been celebrated from the first for their admirable skill as artists. Here also the monks manufactured embroidery in cloth of gold and silk. The most renowned painters of this monastery were Dom Sylvester and Dom James the Florentine, who endowed their convent with the most magnificent choral books ever seen. The right hand of the latter was preserved with veneration in the monastery as a holy relic. Dom Lorenzo and Dom Bartholomew in a later age continued to render this house illustrious for the art of miniature painting, which did not degenerate till 1470, when the discipline became relaxed *.

Fra Bartolomeo was a friar at first in a convent of Prato, to which he had retired after the death of Savonarola, and afterwards in that of St. Mark at Florence. His skill as a painter delighted the Florentines as much as his piety edified them. His first picture, after spending four years in contemplation without taking up his pencil, was that in a chapel of the abbey, representing St. Bernard in an ecstasy. The blessed Angelico of Fiesoli, a Dominican friar, was a painter of such celebrity, that the Pope drew him from his convent to Rome to complete some works he had commenced there; and it was his conversation while painting with the Pontiff which caused St. Antoninus, whom he pointed out as a proper person when the Pope expressed his disquietude on not being able to make a choice, to be raised to the archiepiscopal see of Florence †. It was the disciple of this blessed friar, Benozzo Gozzoli, who painted the history of the Old Testament from Noah to Solomon in the Campo Santo at Pisa, where he spent the ten last

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* Annal. Camald. lib. xlviii.

† Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. Dom. tom. iv.

years of his life, in the practice of his art and of all Christian virtues. In later times the same track was followed by Benedict de Matera, a monk of Mount Cassino, and Gabriel Mattei, a monk of the order of Servitans, of Sienna, who decorated the choral books of the cathedral. Before the Introit of each Sunday and festival they placed a picture analogous to the commemoration of the day, and "I doubt," says a modern author*, "whether it be possible to find a collection of paintings which could leave a more delicious and durable impression on the Christian soul." At Ferrara also flourished a series of similar artists in the cloisters, from the Benedictine monk Serrati, who painted the choral books in 1240, to brother Jerome Fiorini of the monastery of St. Bartholomew, in the fifteenth century. Michael Savonarola, in his book in praise of Padua, speaks of its school of painting, as being concerned with a part of philosophy †. The monks held the same opinion, and extended the connection to religion. "I think," says Cæsar of Heisterbach, "that sculptors and painters of sacred subjects will have a great reward when devotion and not avarice is their motive. There was a certain monk of a black order in the diocese of Mayence, lately deceased, who was a good painter, and so devout to our order, that, gratis, having only his expenses paid, he used to paint crucifixions of great beauty over different altars; for he made nearly all the crucifixes that we possess, asking no expenditure from us. The supreme Crucifix, in whose image we are all made, wishing to show to his painter how much that most holy labour pleased Him, on Good-Friday, when His Passion is especially represented, deigned to take him from the world, not without the admiration of many. As if the Lord had said, 'Because you always laboured devoutly in mind and body concerning my Passion, thinking upon it, and exhibiting it by pictures to others, so, on this very day of my Passion, I will take you from labour to rest, in which, not mentally or by pictures figuratively, but in presence, that is, face to face, you shall contemplate me ‡.'" In fact, closely connected with the devotion of the cloister was the old Christian school of painting; and even when artists did not wear the cowl, they sought its influence, as may be witnessed in those of Umbria, who with Perugino and his disciple Raphael, at first a pupil of Fra Bartolomeo, drew their conceptions under the influence of the seraphic Father and his holy order,—as also in the Venetian painters, who remained in communication with the pure monastic school, in the mountains of Umbria down to the end of the fifteenth century. When artists, forsaking the mystic school of painting of the ages of faith, yielded to the influence of the heathen delusions that were revived in the fifteenth century, that school still found an asylum in religious houses, where the monks retained a style pure from all profane innovations, forming it from the models in the miniatures of the old choral books; while in the cities where universities were established, as in Pisa, Pavia, and Padua, there was hardly any mystic painter, Bologna itself becoming sterile during the interval between Francia and the Carachi's, in consequence of the classical mania reigning in them, which was incompatible with these religious inspirations of art *.

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* Rio.

† Comment. de Laudibus Pat. ap. Mur. Rer. It. Script. xxiv.

‡ Illust. Mirac. et Hist. Mem. lib. viii. 24.

It is gratifying to find in conclusion, that the monastic labours in relation to the arts, which require for their perfection a lofty and spiritualized imagination, are appreciated according to their true value, by one of those philosophers who have the best right to complain of the misdirection and deficiency of their works in regard to scientific subjects. "It may perhaps be a necessary condition in the progress of man," says Whewell, "that the arts which aim at beauty reach their excellence before the sciences, which seek speculative truth; and if this be so, we inherit, from the middle ages, treasures which may well reconcile us to the delay which took place in their cultivation of experimental science †."

Thus, having followed the monks through the circle of their various occupations, without and within the cloister, methinks the charge of idleness adduced against them has been sufficiently refuted. Casting a look back upon the prodigies accomplished by their industry, how strange and unjust must seem that accusation now!

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* Rio, De l'Art Chrétien.

† The Philosophy of the Inductive Sciences, vol. ii. 339.

What immense results were obtained in the beginning by the Benedictine order, from the fifth till the twelfth century, as detailed in the thirteen volumes of Mabillon! Such was the first stage of monachism. Then with the order of Preachers came that of St. Francis, perhaps more speculative, more tender, more replete with every fruit of noble genius than the Benedictine family. Fresh obstacles intervene; but the activity of charity is not to be extinguished. Whatever weight the world puts down, the flame breaks out elsewhere and mounts. The third stage commenced with the heresy of the sixteenth century: a different order was required to meet this new disaster; therefore then arose the Jesuits, more adapted than the others to combat it, including instructions, preaching and confessing, or the art of conducting minds. "One can never sufficiently praise," says Michelet, "their devotion in the missions. China would now possess the plenitude of Christian felicity if their work had not been destroyed. Such," he adds, "is the threefold stage of the monastic history,—the Benedictine, or work; the Franciscan, or love,—the Ignatian, or action, social action. What astonishing fecundity," he then exclaims, "what an exhaustless sap in the Christian religion!" But let us return to the cell of the contemplatist, that we may admire the sublime elevations of ascetic wisdom, to which so many monks attained in the cloisters of the middle ages.

CHAPTER XVI.

Look you, who comes here? a young man and an old, in solemn talk. This is what the cloister daily witnesseth; for here was practised the prophetic precept, "Interroga patrem tuum, et annunciabit tibi: seniores tuos, et dicent tibi." These old monks had useful words for every one, according to his peculiar necessity. Sometimes they were familiar instructions. Thus, to the encouragement and assistance given him when a boy of twelve years of age, by Dom Berthereau, a Benedictine of St. Germain-des-Près, who noticed him taking his daily recreation at the same hour as he did himself, in the gardens of that abbey, Sylvester de Sacy used to ascribe the direction of his mind to the study of the Semitic languages, which so gloriously occupied the remainder of his life. At other times they assumed the form and tone of solemn spiritual authority. But who can describe the affecting conversations, the sublime dialogues that were held under the dim arched cloisters, or in the beautiful garden of the monastery, or in each cell, when young men thus interrogated the Fathers, and the seniors spoke to them of God and of the soul, of the world's mutability, of time and chance, and the eternal years? "Quam pulchrum illud, quam dulce secretum," to use the words of a Roman, alluding to the walk of Spurinna with his friends. "Quantum ibi antiquitatis! quæ facta, quos viros audias! quibus præceptis imbuare*!" Those who heard the artless eloquence of the monk, discovered that the greatest happiness on earth is to meet, if it were only for once in one's life, a true man of God. Some conception of these conversations may perhaps be formed from the dialogues of Sulpicius Severus, or from observing the conferences between St. Francis and his humble followers, or from what is recorded of the evening to which the Church alludes in that Benedictine hymn of St. Scholastica at Lauds.

"Quam tenet dulcis mora colloquentes!
Ore concordes animoque versant
Lucidum cœli decus, et beatæ
Gaudia vitæ."

But no written records can ever convey an adequate idea of what on these occasions passed Those who heard the monks' conversation were not likely to be verbose or circumstantial in its praise. "The greatest praise after hearing a philosopher is silence," said Musonius,—therefore the wisest poet, describing the hearers of Ulysses, says, that when he ceased speaking, they all began not to cry out and vociferate, but to consult together†.

"The flight of the woman into the desert," is interpreted by Richard of St. Victor, the secrets of the spiritual life *. What were these secrets? In the first place, they were the mysteries of faith, imparted to all the faithful; but moreover they implied the application of these mysteries and the philosophical consideration of their results, and it was in this exercise that the wisdom of the monks was principally employed. Speaking of the writings which transmit it, a modern historian makes this just observation, "Moral truth is eternal; though the forms of communicating it may vary, it remains unchanged. That it constitutes the most valuable portion of our knowledge, no one but a utilitarian, who has neither intellect to apprehend nor taste to feel whatever transcends his material circle, will deny." Cowper has the same conviction. "Pardon me," he says, "ye that give the midnight oil to learned cares or scientific research, though I revere your honourable names, and hold the world indebted to your discoveries, yet let me stand excused if I esteem a mind employed upon eternal things as far more intelligent and better taught the use of profitable thought than ye, when highest in renown." This is the oldest philosophy: to this the human mind would in all ages have assented: so that were Plato to come back to the world, without doubt he would say, that the greatest and wisest man was he who led the most Christian life; and in face of the Institute itself, that the monk was, after all, the true philosopher. The pedants who eulogise Socrates and Cicero in order to cast into a deeper shade of ignominy the monastic orders, only prove themselves unworthy scholars to second such great men. It is one thing to have read their books as grammarians; it is another to have caught their spirit, as possessing minds large enough to take it in. Socrates would have deemed the Imitation as the most sublime of all human books; and Plato and Aristotle, whether they might be agreed on other points or not, would have subscribed to the sentence of a modern author, "that all definitions which have been given of philosophy at any period of its duration, the most extensive as the most profound apply to the scholastic †." This was an induction to which the Italian scholars, who are supposed to have revived the ancient learning, could come without

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* Plinii Epist. iii. 1.

† Aul. Gel. v. 1.

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* Super Apocalyps. lib. iv. 3.

† Ozanam, Essai sur la Philosophie de Dante.

assistance. "Were not Albertus Magnus," asks one of them, "Thomas, Ægidius, and Scot equal to Pythagoras, Zeno, Chrysippus, and Aristotle, in philosophy*?" We have before remarked, that the monks were not unconscious of the family likeness which could be traced in them to men of ancient times, and that they even accepted their titles; as when the monk Otherich, scholastic of the monastery of Magdeburg in the tenth century, whom the chronicle of that city terms an incomparable master of wisdom and eloquence and of the liberal arts, is styled by Cosmas of Prague "Philosophus." Theirs was an infinite love of infinite wisdom, which might be truly termed an angelic philosophy, differing essentially from all schemes of personal mysticism, as the old writers show from its genuine Catholic character. The catechumens, they observe, are led into the church by the eastern door, to indicate that the wisdom of God from the east, or revelation hath illumined them†. So the monk avowed that he had nothing but what he received. To conceive the possibility of acquiring or retaining this true philosophy of the highest order, we must observe the assiduity of the monks in the school where it was taught, which was the altar; for in a strictly philosophic sense their Doctor was God. Yes, He who taught their hearts had His chair in heaven; and so St. Thomas, writing to a friend who had asked him the best way of acquiring the treasure of wisdom, among other counsels, tells him to have purity of conscience‡. Now the mode of recovering this purity was analogous to that of its first corruption, as the most ancient Fathers of the Church observe, alluding to what they term the counter-poison—or to the Body of Him who is the Master of death and the source of our life§. "The practice of frequent communion, sensible in all ages of the Church, shows itself," as Gerbert remarks, "with a more striking character during the middle ages. In the midst of the gross manners of barbarous nations, it appeared in the interior of monasteries like a vision of the life of Angels. The religious orders which have cultivated the soil of

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* Poggii Bracciol. Præfat. in Hist. Florent. ap. Id. tom. xx.

† Landulph. Mediolanens. Hist. l. 12.

‡ Ap. Martene, Vet. Script. i. p. 1352.

§ S. Greg. Nyss. Catechet.

Europe have done much more—they have cultivated the waste lands of the human soul. The rule obliged the monks to approach often to the holy table; and the divine word, which alone was heard in the depth of their retreats, reminded them every day of the perfection which was required for this familiarity with the Saint of saints. This thought, perpetually present with them, excited them without ceasing to acquire the science of their own heart. They cultivated it with infinite pains, in order that they might be able to bring to the most august as well as to the most sweet of mysteries, the purest flower of human affections. The ascetical books of this period present an exquisite delicacy of sentiment, which, from the bosom of cloisters, spread itself by degrees into the world, and became applied to other objects, producing that mysticism of love and honour which has exercised such an influence upon the manners and the literature of Christian people. The asceticism of the middle ages has left an inimitable monument in the four books of the Imitation of Christ. From what source did the poor solitary religious man who composed them, derive this unfailing love; for he has written so well only because he has loved much? He tells us himself, in each line of his chapters upon the Eucharist: it was from the communion of the altar."

Love, thankfulness—this is the cloister's soul, as that of the world is ingratitude. Louis of Blois speaks of a monk who, on his conversion, was less afflicted at the thought of having exposed himself to suffer eternal punishment than at that of having been ungrateful to God his Creator. "There is a twofold knowledge of truth," says the angelic doctor, "that by grace and that by nature; and that which is by grace is twofold—speculative only, and affective, producing the love of God *." Now this latter constituted the monastic wisdom; and not only the monks, but all who consorted with them, knew that this alone was wisdom. "No affection, even pious," says Peter of Blois, "is meritorious to salvation, unless it proceeds from the love of Christ. When you hear something read concerning our Lord, you may be moved to tears, in the same manner as you weep when you hear certain fabulous histories, as those concerning

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* 9. lxiv. a. i.

Arthur, and Ganganus, and Tristan; you may pity our Lord as you pity Arthur, but both tears are lost alike if you do not love God, if your tears do not flow from the fountains of the Saviour, from faith, hope, and charity*." "In order that we may truly philosophize," says Petrarch writing to John Colonna, "we must first love and worship Christ. Let us be all things, but so as to be christians before all things. 'Sic philosophica, sic poetica, sic historias legamus ut semper ad aurem cordis evangelium Christi sonet†.'" One discerns in these words the brother of the Carthusian as, in those of Peter of Blois, the devoted companion of the monks. An intimate union with Christ was thus the chief characteristic of the monastic wisdom. While men of the world fled from him, and many, even faithful christians, waited for him, the monks, according to the distinction of St. Avitus, may be said to have gone to meet him. All their science was directed to him. "Philosophy," says St. Bonaventura, is the medium by which the theologian fabricates for himself a mirror from creature, by which, as if by a ladder, he ascends to heaven‡." "We may distinguish six lights," he says again; "exterior, or that of mechanical art; inferior, or that of sensitive knowledge; interior, or that of philosophic knowledge (which is threefold, rational, comprising grammar and logic, natural, or physics, and moral); and superior, which is the light of grace and of the Holy Scripture: but these lights have all their vesper hour; for all this science will be destroyed. Therefore succeeds to them the day which has no vesper hour, namely, the illumination of glory. Now these six illuminations can be reduced to the days of creation, all having their origin in one light, and therefore all are ordained to the Holy Scripture, for the multiform wisdom of God, which is delivered clearly in Scripture, is contained in a hidden manner in all knowledge and in all nature, so that all knowledge serves theology§." The study of the Holy Scriptures was incessantly pursued in the cloisters of the middle ages with a deep philosophic spirit. What profound and interesting questions, suggested by the book of Genesis and other parts of the sacred Writ, were proposed and

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[*] De Confessione.

[†] Epist. lib. vi. 2.

[‡] Breviloquium.

[§] De Reductione Artium ad Theologiam.

solved by monks at the instigation of Charlemagne [*]! But at present we are in the cell, not the school. Let us attend therefore to the ascetic side of the monastic wisdom.

"———— Cur sapientes
Dum terris vivunt, spernunt terrena, nec aurum,
Regna, voluptates quærunt, quæ sola videntur splendida [†]?"

You perceive by this question of the ancient poet, that it is not babbling against monastic superstition which will explain the psychological phenomenon we are about to observe. To a certain extent Plato witnessed it when he compared Socrates to the figures of Silenus, outwardly hideous but admirable within; adding, "He cares not what riches or honours a man may possess, esteeming as nothing whatever seems happiness to the generality of men; and he passes his life indulging in irony, and, as it were, playing with men, while his interior is golden and divine, beautiful and wonderful; so that, in short, whatever Socrates says should be done ought to be done, *τοῦτο οὐ σειληνῶδες*." So when we find under the cowl that intellectual and spiritual beauty which is more excellent and delightful than all the loveliness of material substances, as Dionysius the Carthusian observes [‡]; when we find men girt humbly with the cord, to whom heaven has given the tone and thoughts of angels as manifestly as the sky imparts to lakes and mountains its azure or its golden hues, Plato's question, *τοῦτο οὐ σειληνῶδες*; may naturally be asked.

We have already seen that this type was familiar to the earliest ages of the church. "A stranger and alien is the gnostic all his life long," says St. Clement of Alexandria; "though inhabiting the city he despises the things which other men admire in it, and lives there as in a desert, that not the place may compel but choice may show him to be just [§]." Such was the monk, calm, and meditative, who had stolen away from noises, whose mind, as Dante says, "was inwardly so wrapt, it gave no place to aught that asked admittance from without [||]."

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[*] Wicboldi Quæstiones in Octateuchum ap. Martene, Vet. Script. tom. ix.

[†] Lucan, iv.

[‡] De Venustate Mundi.

[§] Stromat. vii. 12.

[||] Purg. 17.

"To be wise indeed, and happy, and self-possest," says a modern philosopher, "we must often be alone; we must mix as little as we can with what is called society, and abstain rather more than seems desirable even from the better few." "They who are strengthened in the love of God are in proportion weakened to this world; they grow faint in the flesh from beholding the light of eternity. The world beholds him as one wearied and faint from the impressions of an occult colloquy *." The truth of these words of the Pope, St. Gregory the Great, was verified in the monks whose eyes had taken view of Him by whom, as Dante says, "all other thoughts were barred admittance †." Do you complain of their detachment from the world, and of their lives so hidden as to have many points analogous with those that sleep in the sepulchres? You should rather admire their consistency and their zeal in following the Apostolic doctrine; for hear how St. Chrysostom comments upon the words of St. Paul, "The world is crucified unto me and I am to the world." "Remark here," says the holy doctor, "the force of this whole sentence. Not only is the world dead to him, but he is dead to the world. In fact, he who is living, though there is no longer any social relation between him and the dead, nevertheless is not altogether insensible to what regards the latter. Possibly he may still admire the beauty of that body which has been deprived of life; he may lament for it and regret it; but a dead man feels no longer any sentiments for those who sleep with him in the silence of the tomb. Therefore, adds the Apostle, 'And I am dead to the world.' What a prodigious separation from things below is here expressed! How it indicates an entire devotion to heavenly things while living on the earth ‡!" The blessed John of the Cross, after citing the words of the Canticle, "For if I was neither seen nor heard of, you will say that I have lost myself; that walking in love I was lost and am found," proceeds in these words: "If then from henceforth you behold me no more in the meadow, and if you can no more find me, say that I have lost myself; for, being wholly inflamed by love, I have voluntarily lost myself; but afterwards I have been

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* Lib. iv. in Job.

† Par. 32.

‡ On Compunction, lib. ii. cap. 2.

recovered. This refers to the reproach which people of the world are in habits of casting upon those who give themselves seriously to God. They accuse them of being too retired, too abstracted, of being good for nothing, because they abandon what is esteemed and sought after in the world : but the soul says to her censors, that she despises all that for the love of God ; that she separates herself from them willingly ; that she considers such a loss as her greatest gain ; that it is her pleasure, her honour ; and that from henceforth she only seeks for her divine spouse in the practice of the most perfect virtues. By the meadow she understands the world where seculars saunter and rejoice in feeding the flock of their passions, as it were, in a fertile and pleasant meadow : she says that she is no longer to be met with in that place ; she desires that they count her for dead to all their sensual satisfactions, and that they publish it everywhere ; and by being afterwards recovered she implies, that in this voluntary losing of herself she has gained everything." This is the self-mortification which, as Louis of Blois says, "is quickly followed by a living light which God sheds into our souls, and finally by our union with God. Oh yes !" exclaims this holy abbot, "what stops us ? the only thing which stops us is our tepidity, our want of courage. If we knew how to get rid of this ; if we knew how to substitute for it a holy zeal for our salvation, to die to ourselves and to all perishable objects; if we applied all our care to prepare a proper habitation in our souls for God ; it would be impossible that we should not arrive at length at the very summit of perfection so as to possess and feel God within us *."

Thus again we are presented with proof of the consistency of the monastic character ; and what can place it in a stronger light than this observation ? that, notwithstanding the wide range of objects which its occupations implied, the mind was never so attached to any of them as to forget its main employment ; that the monk who tilled the ground preserved learning, cultivated poetry, with all other arts, and thus, to use the ancient comparison, walked a little upon the shore to admire the beauty of the shells, never lost sight of the ship to which he belonged, or wandered so far from it as to be beyond

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* Epist. ad Florentin.

reach of the pilot's call; but keeping that daily before his eyes, never entertained a base thought, or greatly desired any thing that could be gathered on the mortal strand; that, in fine, he was one who meditated on the eternal years? What are the eternal years? A great thought, replies the monk, with St. Augustin. That thought implies a silence from all disturbance from without, and from all tumult of men; he must rest within who wishes to think upon those eternal years. The years in which we are are not eternal. They are constantly changing, and never standing still. Years and days incessantly move and pass; and we cannot even lay hold of an hour or a moment; for while we utter the word it is already gone. We can hold nothing of these years; they are mutable. We must think upon the eternal years which stand and are always the same. We must think of them in silence. "Better is one day in thy courts," says David, "than a thousand." Men desire a thousand days, and wish to live long. Let them learn to despise a thousand days to wish for one day which has neither rising nor setting; one day, one eternal day, to which yesterday did not yield and which is not pressed upon by tomorrow. Let that one day be our desire. What are a thousand days to us? Let us press forwards to one day; to one let us hasten *.

Methinks, after hearing such words, even a child, on seeing the hooded men pass along so silent and collected, would turn pale at their solemnity. And yet, with all this gravity, the great peculiarity of the cloistral life was its sweetness; for the spirit of the place might boast in Dante's words and say—

——————"Who'er frequents me once
Parts seldom; so I charm him, and his heart
Contented knows no void †."

What is the most natural and universal of our desires? To be happy, without doubt. But what reason have we to suppose that it was not this desire which drew men to the cloister? Is it nothing to gain these pious tears? this faculty of love? these mystic ecstasies? The Stagyrite affirms that a contemplative and theoretical man has in himself matter of delight without being obliged to

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* St. August. Tract. in Ps. 76.

† Purg. 19.

have recourse to sensible and external things. Do you suppose that the monk formed an exception to this law? What must have been the enjoyment of Dionysius the Carthusian when writing his treatise on the beauty of the world, in which he considers the whole supernatural doctrine of the catholic religion in the light of beauty, as being full of beauty to prepare souls for that beatitude which will consist in beholding deliciously the uncreated and super-infinite beauty of the divine essence, and in being in an ineffable manner transformed into its image, and fulfilled with the exuberant profusion of the goodness, and light, and beauty of God [*]? To be wise and happy are reciprocal terms. "If you had once tasted the sweetness of wisdom," says Peter of Blois, "all things in comparison with it would have become insipid to you: for it has an incomparable treasure of delights, and it imparts an overflowing grace of all good. But you cannot attend both to studies and to riches. God has been bountiful towards you in enabling you to pursue the scholastic warfare [†]."

Again, the Pythagoræans said that "God, being the Author of all things to whom they should be referred, the most perfect life and happiness was therefore when extremities were no longer separated from their centre, but when in this one all were collected [‡]." Why should we then doubt the happiness of a state in which, as Dionysius the Carthusian says, "the grace of God withdraws the soul from the tumult of things to the joys of silence, that is, to the clearest splendour of supreme light, in which, from all delusion of fleshly desires, and unquiet phantoms, and wandering thoughts, it sweetly rests in love [§]?" How great is the praise to adhere to God, so as to live in Him, to be wise in Him, to be happy in Him, to enjoy such a good eternally, who can worthily conceive or express [||]? You see how the church realized the aspirations of the philosophers. "Would you not justly style most miserable," says Cicero, "him whom you beheld inflamed with desires, seeking all things madly with an insatiable cupidity, more ardent and thirsty in proportion as he drank more pleasures from all sides? What! that man elate with levity, and exulting in vain joy, and bearing himself presumptuously, is he not so much the more wretched as he seems to himself more happy? So then as these are miserable, those, on the contrary, are happy whom no fear disturbs, no lusts excite, no futile joys elevate, no languid pleasures liquefy. As the sea is understood to be calm when not the least breath of wind ruffles it, so the soul is at rest and pacified when there is no perturbation with which it can be moved *." Can you doubt whether this wisest perhaps of the philosophers would have placed happiness in the monastic peace? But that peace included more than he could have foreseen. St. Anselm speaks of monks as "those who are attracted by the sweetness of God to a life which is to enjoy perpetual beatitude †." And St. Thomas says, "that the feeling a delight in God while the soul despises earthly things, and is not conscious of mortal sin, is a criterion to know that one has acquired grace ‡."

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[*] De Venustate Mundi, 19.

[†] Pet. Bles. Epist. 81.

[‡] Jamblich. Adhort. ad Phil. 4.

[§] De Fonte Lucis.

[||] De Civ. Dei, xii. 1.

The monks, therefore, had their positive enjoyments; and, even by the voice of ancient philosophy, are proclaimed happy. Richard of St. Victor, indeed, observes that the cloistral life would otherwise have been impossible. "For," saith he, "we cannot desire things above unless we despise earthly things; and we cannot despise earthly things unless we are attracted by desire of things above: for the heart cannot be without delight: it must incline to something." Hear how Œlred, Abbot of Rievaux speaks of these enjoyments! "When man," he says, "withdraws himself from external tumults, and enters into the recesses of his own mind,—when he perceives nothing unquiet, nothing out of order, nothing of ill-will, nothing of remorse,—when he finds that all things are cheerful, all harmonious, all peaceful and calm, —when, like the father of a well-regulated pacific family, he sees smiles on all his thoughts, words, and works,—there arises within himself an unspeakable security; from that security springs delight; and that delight rising into rapture, he praises God the more fervently in proportion as he sees traces of the divine image within his own breast §." These were the delights which the sages of

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* Tuscul. v. 6.

† Epist. 8.

‡ i. 2. Q. 112. 5.

§ Spec. Char.

the cloister possessed, and which proved to them a remedy for all the bitterness and weariness of life. "O Deus æterne!" they exclaim, alluding to the vain desires which might still assail them, "si tu mihi dulcescas et sapias, quam cito fugient et peribunt." The admirable secret of these raptures is indicated in the following words of Richard of St. Victor: "There are some who wish to receive the taste of divine sweetness, who yet are unwilling to show humanity to their neighbour *." But, says St. Thomas, "if any one should have all gifts, without charity he has not life." So the monk, by his ecstasies, was brought back to that charity which constituted the peculiar characteristic of his wisdom: "for," as St. Bonaventura says, "what distinguishes theological truth"—in which it consisted—"from all other, even from moral philosophy, is, that it teaches us to acquire charity †." "In fact it was a counsel of St. Francis," says one of his friars, "which he gives to us all, that if we are in contemplation, and even in an ecstasy, and some one should come desiring our assistance, we must immediately leave God for God, and run with haste to obey Him who has called us ‡." This was strictly the monastic rule: it was the precept of all the great mystics of St. Victor. Hence the singular combination of erudition and the love of almsgiving which is found in the monks. The more they abstracted themselves, the more they seemed to love men. Helgalo, in his epitome of the life of Robert, after saying that Gerbert for prodigious learning was illustrious, adds, "et præcipue in eleeomosyna sancta §."

But now, seeking repose after a flight so far beyond the vigour of our wing, unable to follow such a teacher long, I would fain hear somewhat of the mysterious histories treasured up in monasteries: for in every cloister there are doubtless some hooded men who in their brains have strange places crammed with observation, the which they vent at times. Oh, I am ambitious to be a listener!

"Whoever wishes to know fully all the wondrous events connected with the holy monasteries of Spain," says Lucius Marineus, "should seek from the priests

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* In Ps. xxv.

† Compend. Theolog. Verit. Præf.

‡ Le Sacré Mont d'Olivet.

§ Ap. Duchesne, iv. 63.

who inhabit them, and who know all mysteries *." So it was in other kingdoms. Let us profit then by our present opportunity: and we shall find more pleasure than in beholding ruins where no one is found who can tell the domestic history of the place. Thou didst say—I thus address my guide in thought—thou knewest

"A monk, whose spirit is a chronicle
Of strange, and secret, and forgotten things.
I pray thee summon him:—'tis said his house
Has old traditions of a mystic lore."

That sage instructor I can hear replying,—

"The monk of whom I spake is old;—so old,
He seems to have outlived a world's decay:
Huge trees seem younger: his hair and beard
Are whiter than the tempest-sifted snow.
——But from his eye looks forth
A life of unconsumed thought, which pierces
The present, and the past, and the to-come."

Then let me add,—

"I would talk with this old monk;
Though he who questions him would have to sail
Where the stream of ocean rages around
The foaming isles."

Yes, reader: in the monasteries were men of a singular and attractive character,—saints, scholars, hermits, travellers, who bore on their countenances the seal of those who have seen every thing on this side of eternity:—men, like that aged Echenes, the oldest of the Phæcians, *καὶ μύθοισι κέκαστο*, who knew many histories; who could relate many miraculous instances of the patience of God in bearing with great sinners, as well as divulge somewhat of the secrets of Heaven's vengeance, in traditions terrible to hear, such as now perhaps are chiefly heard within the cells of Roman cloisters: for Rome still possesses that attraction which in the middle ages made each monastery thronged with visitants, each of whom could a tale unfold that was well worthy of being rescued from oblivion. Monks, on hearing them thus publish the acts of Almighty grace, did but gather up the fragments lest they should be lost: for they understood that, as a mystic command: "the fragments," says an ascetic, "are the words of doctors, the examples of good men, which ought frequently to be considered by studious brethren, and collected in books or on tablets, as if in baskets, for the use of readers [*]." These personal narratives they treasured up in memory wherewith to edify their future guest: and such a charm did they impart to their discourse, seasoned with reflections of their own, that each stranger admitted to their cell would say repeatedly, in the words of Telemachus to Mentor, "Speak on,"—

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* De Reb. Hispaniæ, lib. v.

> *αἰνῶς γὰρ μύθοισιν ἔπεσσί τε σοῖσιν ἀκούων*
> *Τέρπομαι*—— [†].

Or rather in those of Adam to the Angel,—

> "For while I sit with thee, I seem in heav'n."

"Three years ago," says Cæsar of Heisterbach, "Lord Henry, our abbot, who was then vice-abbot, had to visit Clairvaux, in Frisia. On his journey he happened to lodge in the castle of a certain knight named Suederi, who devoutly received him according to his custom. He then related some of the wonderful things which had occurred in our order; and Gerlac, the son of that knight's brother, was present,—in whose heart the seed found such good ground, that from that hour, as Gerlac himself assured me, he began to fluctuate about his conversion, which took place soon after [‡]."

"Miracles and mysteries and sacraments belong to the beauty of the world," says Dionysius the Carthusian: "not in its first state, that of innocence; but in its second state, that of repairing grace [§]." In the middle ages indeed, as at all times, there were men incapable of appreciating them, through the influence of their habitual self-abandonment to the innumerable little vulgar details of life; like the author of the Journal d'un Bourgeois de Paris, in the time of Charles VI., who thinks the Maid of Orleans far less worthy of attention than the price of vegetables in the Paris market. Rigord, speaking of some miracles wrought at the preaching of Foulques de Neuilly, says, "Quæ prætermittimus propter hominum nimiam incredulitatem [*]." With what acute and philosophic eyes miracles were regarded in the cloister, may be learned from the Compendium of St. Bonaventura [†]. Nevertheless, in general, the monks of the middle ages, as if feeling themselves above all suspicion, write boldly in recording all events which seemed to them supported by sufficient testimony; and some in modern times have lamented that the later Benedictine historians, Mabillon and Martène, should have been so far influenced by a fear of scandalising the public around them, as to adopt a different style in relating the same traditions, which are but timidly and faintly sketched in their pages. However, as we before remarked, so far from wishing to work or divulge miracles, the religious orders, in ages of faith, rather sought to conceal them. The Carthusians, in particular, shrunk from the power of working them, on the ground that they did not confer, but only indicated, holiness; and that they even sometimes diminish merit, since it is of imperfect faith to seek them [‡]; and, therefore, St. Hugo, Bishop of Lincoln, refused to turn aside a short distance to see a miraculous host, saying that the things which holy faith prescribes are much more certain than those which are shown by the visible light [§].

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[*] Thomas à Kempis, Sermonum iii.

[†] iv.

[‡] Lib. i. c. 18.

[§] De Venustate Mundi, xii.

To explain why the miracles of St. Hugo were not written down, the historian of his order says, "the Carthusians wish to shine, not with miracles, but with merits [||]." "Far more admirable," says the Abbot Rubertus, speaking of Altmann, a Bishop of Passau, "was the sanctity of this man than the miraculous power which he exercised. Others may wonder that he gave sight to the blind, and made the lame walk; I will rather wonder at the grace which was the inward secret principle of such operations. I will wonder at his humility, at his chastity, at his piety, at his charity, at his devotion, at his solicitude, at his prudence, at his longanimity, at his fortitude. But you cite his miracles: well, be it so. Still I shall always esteem it more admirable to have expelled from the heart avarice, pride, and luxury, than from the eyes and limbs of others to have removed blindness or decrepitude*."

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[*] Ad an. 1197.

[†] Lib. i. c. 29.

[‡] Pet. Sutorus, de Vita Carthus. lib. ii. t. iii. c. vi.

[§] Dorlandi, Chronic. Cartus. iii. 11.

[||] Id. ii. 8.

Dom Martene, in the Preface to his sixth volume of the great collection of ancient writers, says that not only the Benedictines, but also the Cistercians and Præmonstratensians, were unwilling that miracles should be known to take place in their abbeys, fearing to lose their peace and quiet by the crowds that would visit them in consequence. "In the monastery of Eberbac," says Cæsar of Heisterbach, "there was a poor convertite, simple and good, but decrepit. By his touch he used to cure divers infirmities; so that crowds of rich men and poor came to beg his blessing. The abbot, seeing that the quiet of the brethren was disturbed by such a confluence, and the house involved in great expense, forbad him to touch any one in future. This was told to me," adds Cæsar, "two years ago, by the monks, when I was at Eberbac. On my going to the holy man, and asking him to pray for me, he replied, 'Daily I pray for you, and for the whole world†.'"

Mysticism in the cloisters of the middle ages is one of the subjects on which Goerres treats. The subject is immense. It was in the convent of Dysibodusberg that St. Hildegard past eight years. The convent of Unterlinden, in Colmar, was a great school of practical mysticism in the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. Catherine of Gebsweiler, Hedwig of Gundelsheim, Adelheid of Rheinfelden, Herburg of Herkenheim, Margaret of Breisac, Gertrude of Colmar, Agnes of Blozenheim, and many other sisters, enjoyed wondrous gifts and visions there. So also the convent of Thöss, in Thurgau, in Switzerland, where dwelt Elisabeth Steiglin, the spiritual daughter of Suso, the hospital of Dissenhofen, and St. Catherine's convent at Hohenwyll, in Thurgau, the convent of Schönensteinbach, in Alsass, the convent of Adelhausen at Freiburg, in Breisgau, were houses peculiarly favoured in this respect. So also, among the abbeys for men, of the Cistercian house of Waldsassen, in the diocese of Regensburg, many wondrous things are related.

"Great men may jest with saints," says Shakspeare; "'tis wit in them." Such companions are not with us now; so let us obey the friendly sign, and sit down with reverence, and listen. Many instances occur in monasteries—would the blessed father say—of the interposition of Heaven which are deemed miraculous, though some can be otherwise explained. "I have heard it said that there are scornful English writers who pretend that St. Dunstan's own escape was the result of his contrivance, when the floor gave way; but, without taking notice of the malice and impiety of such a suggestion, they should be told that similar accidents are related in many histories, attended with escapes of the same kind. Thus in 1183, when the floor of the room in Erfurth fell in, precipitating all the nobles, King Henry and the Archbishop of Mayence were left standing in the recess of the window *." Undoubtedly, in ages of faith, men, after such escapes, were grateful, ascribing them to divine interposition. We could relate many instances. When St. Maiolus was remaining in the monastery of St. Denis one night, and was reading according to his custom, and had chosen the book on the celestial hierarchy, oppressed with sleep, the candle fell from his hand upon the book; the flame consumed the wick and the wax, but it left the page uninjured †. Father Innocent Ansaldi has a letter from the cautious and sensible Marquis Maffei, in which he speaks of certain cures effected by prayer and the intercession of saints, as having fallen under his own observation, in a manner to convince him of their truth.

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* Ap. Pez. Script. Rer. Aust. i.

† Illust. Mir. x. c. v.

The monastic diaries contain many instances. Thus in the annals of Corby, in Saxony, we read, "This year," 1406, "Gunther Coënhus, a vicar in Einbee, almost in the agony, was brought to us in a chariot, and by the patronage of St. Vitus, after a few days, he returned home sound and joyful ‡." "A certain abbot of our order," says Cæsar of Heisterbach, "being astonished at the miraculous cures wrought by one of his monks, whose vestments healed the persons who touched them, asked him once secretly if he could imagine the cause? To whom he answered, 'Truly, I know not. I do nothing more than the others.' 'Were you not disturbed when that soldier lately set fire to our grange?'

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* Chronic. Montis Sereni, ap. Menckenii Script. Rer. Ger. ii.

† Bibliothèque Cluniac.

‡ Ap. Leibnitz, Script. B. ii.

asked the abbot. 'No,' said the monk, 'for I commit all to God.' Then the abbot knew the cause of such virtue in him *." It would be long to discourse on this subject. But let us hear instances of more uncommon grace.

There was in the twelfth century a monk of Cluny, named Benedict, who after being a secular priest, became a monk and a model of the contemplative life. His spare form, his venerable but neglected hairs, his eyes half closed, his mouth ever pronouncing sacred words, indicated that the man was not on earth, but in heaven. Day and night he meditated on the Holy Scriptures; and he would always use a psalter that had a gloss, in order that he might lose nothing of its sense. He spent a great part of the night in prayer and watching. He had for his cell a little oratory in a lofty and distant turret, which was consecrated in honour of St. Michael the archangel. It is said that he had visions of angels, and that one night in particular he beheld the whole monastery full of angels clothed in white †,

"For spirits in what shape they choose,
Dilated or condens'd, bright or obscure,
Can execute their airy purpose,
And works of love or enmity fulfil."

Randiscius, a monk, dying in the monastery of Mount Cassino, being in the article of death, as the brethren repeated round him the prayers for the commendation of the soul, cried out suddenly, "Silence, silence. Do you not hear the lauds in the sky? Do you not see the youths that sing, whose countenances and robes are white as the snow? Silence, for God's sake, I implore you, and let me listen to that sweetest song;" and with these words his spirit departed ‡.

Who has not heard of the divine visions imparted to the angel of the school? But one should hear friars of his order relate the details. Touron will satisfy us. It was while praying in the chapel of St. Nicholas, in the church of St. Dominick, at Naples, that he was seen in an ecstasy by Dominick de Caserte, who heard the voice from the crucifix, "Bene de me scripsisti, Thoma, quam

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* Lib. x. c. 6.

† Bibliothec. Clun. 599.

‡ Chronic. S. Monast. Cas. iii. c. 51.

ergo mercedem accipies?" to which he answered, "Non aliam, Domine, nisi te ipsum." After this he renounced writing and teaching, and prepared for death. On Passion Sunday, while saying mass in that church in presence of many friars and several officers of the King of Naples, he was again visited with ecstasy. After coming to himself he would reveal nothing, but only said, "Talia mihi sunt revelata, quod ea quæ scripsi et docui, modica mihi videantur." After this he was wholly occupied with eternity; and he said, foretelling his death, "Sicut doctrinæ sic cito finis erit et vitæ." When he had expired in the abbey of Fossa Nuova, a marvellous light shone over that house. Albert the Great, being at Cologne, was apprized of his death the same day and hour. But these things are widely known. Hear some of the purely domestic secrets of monasteries. "Lambert, a monk of St. Hubert, in the Ardennes, was proud on account of his noble birth. On the feast of Sts. Peter and Paul, being about to read nocturnal vigils, he intended to pass before the abbot without making any reverence. Suddenly he saw in the arms of that holy man our Lord, surrounded with a blaze of glory. Trembling, he could scarcely stand to read. On returning he made a most humble reverence to the abbot, and burst into tears, to the surprise of all present *."

In the Bibliotheca Cluniacensis we read that Hildebrand, deacon of the Roman church, who was afterwards Pope St. Gregory VII., while in the monastery of Cluny, in the time of St. Hugo, thought he beheld our Saviour sitting by the side of that holy abbot as he sat in the chapter room. Here the veracity of the narrator is as unquestionable as that of the witness.

How many have walked under these cloisters who were in life and death more truly than Calabria's abbot, Joachim, endowed with soul prophetic! St. Benedict was found on one occasion, not sighing and weeping at his prayers, but groaning bitterly, from foreseeing that all his monastery on Mount Cassino, which he had built for the brethren, and all the things which he had prepared for their use, would, by the judgment of God, be delivered up to the Gentiles; though he knew it was granted to him that they should escape with life: all

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* Hist. Andagenensis Monast. ap. Martene, Vet. Script. iv. 924.

which was fulfilled by the hand of the Langobards, when they came by night and destroyed the monastery *.

Sophronius mentions a similar instance. "In a monastery of Scythopolis," he says, "we met Anastasius, who told us, that one night, as he rose to give the signal for the brethren to assemble, he heard George, an old monk, weeping, who, on asking him the cause of his sorrow, replied, that he had had a vision, in which it seemed to him as if he beheld Jesus Christ upon a throne, rejecting the prayers of many suppliants, and inexorable, though his blessed mother interceded. On the following day there was an earthquake, which overthrew the maritime cities of Phœnicia †."

Wadding mentions, that brother Thomasuccius, a minor friar, uttered many prophecies in rhythm, in the Italian tongue, in which he predicted the ruin of several Italian cities; all which proved true. "Many things I have heard of him," says St. Antoninus the archbishop, "from those who had seen him and known his conversation. Ugolino Trincius, the tyrant of Fulgino, had in vain resolved to put to death this man of God, who had reproved him for his cruelty. Suddenly, fear and reverence succeeding to his fury, he wished to learn from him, whether the years of his own life would be many. To whom the friar replied, 'You will live till the town bell shall fall to the ground, and calves fly over the turret.' The tyrant was overjoyed at such an answer; but in 1377, when the Florentines excited the people of Fulgino to revolt, the citizens rushed to arms at the ringing of the bell, which fell down from the tower, on which the enemy placed their standard, on which two calves were emblazoned. Then rushing into the palace, they threw Trincius out of the window, who thus miserably perished ‡." In 1289, when the blessed friar, Petrus Pectinarius, was on his death bed, a little before expiring, he predicted the future calamities of three cities, saying, "Woe to Pistoia! woe to Florence! woe to Sienna!" The first by various wars was brought to ruin; Florence became torn by disorders, and its armies were twice defeated, at Allipassum and at Monte Cattino; and, finally, Sienna was visited with diverse calamities and

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* Chronic. Casinens. c. xvii.

† Pratum Spirituale, 50.

‡ Annal. Min. tom. ix.

intestine wars. The tomb of this holy friar is in the convent of his order in the latter city *.

In the island of Iona you would hear things truly admirable of the saints who had dwelt in the famous monastery there. One time, on a day of raging tempest and intolerable agitation of waters, St. Columbkill, sitting in that abbey, said to the brethren, "Prepare for receiving a guest soon." But they replied, "Who can pass the straits in such a storm as this?" But the saint said again, "A holy and elect man will come to us before vespers, and the Almighty will grant a calm in the storm." Lo! the same evening a vessel arrived, in which was St. Chamnech, who was honourably and hospitably received †.

"While stopping at the pool of God, near the mouth of the river, a Scottish poet came to the saint, and when, after some conversation, he had departed, the brethren said to the saint, 'Why, when Coronanus was going away, did you not ask him to sing some song, according to his art?' To whom the saint replied, 'Why do you now utter vain words? How could I ask a song of joy from that wretched man who is about to perish by the hands of his enemies?' After a short time, a person arrived from the other side, saying, that the poet who had just left us had been slain ‡."

St. Columbkill foresaw the time of his own death. Ascending the hill above the abbey, he blessed the place, and prophesied that it would flourish long in honour. Then descending, and returning to the monastery, he sat in his cell writing out the Psalter. When he had come to that verse of the thirty-third Psalm, "Inquirentes autem Dominum non deficient omni bono," "Here," he says, "I stop; but what follows, let Baitheneus write." Well did he stop at that verse to whom were about to open goods that were not to fail for ever. Then he entered the church to assist at the first vespers of Sunday; after which he returned to the hospice, and sat upon his bed of rock, which to-day is the stone upon his grave. Then he spoke to the brethren for the last time. "Hæc vobis, O filioli, novissima commendo verba, ut inter vos mutuam

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* Id. tom. v.

† Adamnani Scoti de S. Columb. apud Canisii Lectiones Antiquæ, tom. i.

‡ Id.

et non fictam habeatis charitatem cum pace." Then relapsing to silence till about midnight, when the bell sounded, hastily rising, he hurried to the church before any one had entered it, and prostrated himself before the altar. Diormitrus, following, saw the whole church illuminated by a great light, which suddenly went out as he reached the door. Entering in darkness, he called out, "Where are you, father?" nor could he find him, though he felt every where about, till the other brethren came in with their lights, when they saw him there praying. Then raising him up, Diormitrus placed his head in his bosom, while the monks, holding their lights, began to lament around him. As we heard from some who were present, the saint, opening his eyes, looked round upon them with a smiling countenance, as if he saw the holy angels coming for him. Diormitrus then raised his right hand, that the holy father might bless the brethren. He moved his hand a little, and then, after the holy benediction thus signified, yielded up the ghost. That same hour the whole island of Iona was seen encompassed with a brightness through all the space of air above it to the pole. The saint had told the brethren that none should assist at his funeral but themselves; and his words were fulfilled; for during three days and nights after his transit a great tempest, with furious rain, rendered access to the island impossible; but after his burial it ceased immediately, and the sea again was calm *. This narrative is deeply interesting; but there were, in fact, few monasteries which had not some tradition of predicted death. Dom Cantelen, a holy monk, being in good health in the Abbey of Vendome, foretold that he should die within a week. He continued to work at the edition he was about to publish of the Instructions of St. Gertrude, which he finished on the very day of his death, which verified his prediction †.

Cæsar of Heisterbach relates what follows: "Cuno, the great lord of the castle of Malburg, a man powerful and rich in the world, became a monk three years before his death, and in that short space attained to great sanctity. His monastery had a beautiful mare, which was kept for breeding, so fine was the race. A certain nobleman, Henry de Isenburg, wishing to get it, offered any

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* Id. † Bibliothèque Hist. de la Cong. de S. Maur. 57.

price, but not succeeding, he had it stolen, and then refused to give it up. The said Cuno, who had been his intimate friend while he was in the world, was sent to claim it, when Henry refused. After all his entreaties, seeing him obstinate, he summoned him to the judgment of God, and named a certain day. Henry despised the summons, but Cuno prepared himself to die on that day, and falling sick, told the abbot that on the 6th feria he was to leave the world. The monks never imagined that his sickness was serious, but he actually did expire on the day he predicted, which was the vigil of St. James. Hearing of his death, Lord Henry feared for his skin, and with great haste came to the abbey barefoot, with his own hand leading the charger which he had so proudly retained, and which he now led to the sepulchre of the dead monk, and there did penance *.

"Walter of Bruges," says Wadding, "minister of the province of Tours, "was made Bishop of Poitiers, which dignity he did thrice refuse, till required by the general of his order, Bonagratia, to accept it; a man illustrious in all virtue, and profound in theology. Zealous of the rights of his church, he defended them against Bernard de Gonth, Archbishop of Bordeaux, who, on being elected sovereign pontiff as Clement V., mindful of the old contention, and succumbing to his passion, obliged him to leave the see and retire to his cloister. With pacific mind he bore the opprobrium, but on his deathbed he appealed to God, who avengeth the innocent, and held a parchment-scroll in his hand, on which he wrote that he cited the pontiff who had oppressed him to the tribunal of God within a certain time. The scroll no one could extricate from his grasp, and he was buried holding it. A year after, the pontiff passing that way to compose the dispute between the kings of France and England, ordered the friars to open the sepulchre. The body was found perfect, and the scroll was still in the hand. The pontiff then desired them to give him that scroll, and said that he would return it. He took it, read it, and gave it back, but he turned pale, and well he might. About the time specified in that summons, which gave him seven years, he was obliged to obey, and depart hence †.

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* Illust. Mir. lib. xi. c. 17.

† Annal Min. tom. v. 1279.

All this sounds very solemn at the twilight hour, sitting in an old wainscoted chamber, within an abbey which stands in the midst of a forest, having two or three hooded men by your side. Paintings there were, too, in some monasteries well calculated to aid the effect of such histories. Those who have seen the picture by Murillo, which was taken out of a Spanish abbey, representing St. Bonaventura writing after his death, according to a legend, which supposes that he was permitted to return to life for three days, in order to finish a book he had not completed, will be able to appreciate the impressions which narratives of this kind could inspire. He is seated at a table, and in the act of writing. He has evidently known death; its paleness is over him; but there is such a peaceful benignity in his look, such an unearthly expression, that the beholder is fascinated and struck with awe. "That the grave is fitter to take the living than give up the dead," would, however, be the monk's reply to those who desired to hear such traditions. "Why do you ask me these things?" he would say, in the style of Ulysses; "I know not whether they be true or false—*κακὸν δ' ἀνεμώλια βάζειν*. If you wish to believe them, only look at the picture, and then judge whether imagination alone could have suggested such a countenance." Nevertheless, after much entreaty, a gentle guest might draw somewhat more from the sage instructor, which he in turn might repeat to other listeners, that he would be sure to have in secular house, once Hallowmass come, and a fire in the hall. Hear then what is related in the annals of Corby, in Saxony, at the date of 1095: "Brother Becelinus, keeper of the library, entering it about mid-day on the 9th of the calends of October, saw a man in our habit, sitting at a table, reading the Psalms of David. He shuddered, but it told him to fear nothing. It resembled exactly our Ansgarius, as he is painted in the convent *."

The chronicler of Mount Cassino relates another instance. "The Abbot Gerard," he says, "being very old, and on the anniversary of the Abbot Oderisius, singing the office of the dead for his soul in the chapel of St. Sebastian, after the first vigil, when he had repeated the Antiphon, 'Anima mea Deo vivit,' the Abbot Oderisius suddenly appeared to him behind the altar of the same church, and beckoned to him that he should approach; and when Gerard saw him, he fell on his face and began to weep inconsolably; and when the office was finished he returned to his chamber, weeping and groaning; and being asked by the brethren why he wept, he told them what he had seen, and said he knew that he was about to die; and, in fact, shortly after he fell sick, and departed the way of all flesh; and he was buried in the chapter room at the feet of the Abbot Desiderius*.

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* Annales Corbienses, ap. Leibnitz, Script. Bruns. Illust. 11.

Still the monk would not encourage such enquiries. Some words of this kind might escape his lips, but he would find an excuse to interrupt them. Then would he gaze long in silence on the lovely moon, and then opening his casement, into the night would look forth. This looking forth into the night from cloisters has left many traces in the monastic chronicles. It was from opening the window of his cell one night, as an explorer of the heavens, "horarum explorator," after singing his psalms, that the Neapolitan hermit, who lived on the high steep rock near the public way, beheld the fearful escort which attended the soul of Pandulph from Capua, where he had just expired †. It was owing to the same practice that the monks of Mount Cassino witnessed those innumerable falling stars which, like hail, appeared in the western sky from the fourth watch of the night till day-break, on the fourth feria after the octave of Easter, in the year 1095, at the time when that amazing host of crusaders was proceeding from the west to rescue the holy sepulchre ‡. Orderic Vitalis expressly says, "that of this spectacle Gislebert, Bishop of Lisieux, was a spectator, in consequence of his custom every night, when an old man, to contemplate the stars for a long time §." Indeed, men of science, however hostile to us, attach value to these observations of the monks, and think that their writings furnish proof of the periodical return of falling stars, in different ages, about the 12th of November, when St. Gregory of Tours speaks of having remarked them ||.

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* Chronic. Cas. lib. iv. cap. 77.

† Chron. Mont. Cas. lib. ii. 83.

‡ Lib. iv. 11.

§ Lib. ix.

|| Libri Hist. des Sciences Mathemat. en Italie, 11. 235.

But let us persuade our good monk to return and continue the conversation. The Sorbonne, by its decisions in the year 1518 and 1724, recognised the belief that the dead do sometimes appear to men *. Peter the Venerable relates, that a certain Seignior Gui, slain in a combat, appeared all armed to the curate who had heard his confession, and prayed him to tell his brother Anselm to restore an ox which he, Gui, had taken from a peasant, and to repair some injuries which he had committed in a certain village, on which he had imposed unjust charges, which sins he had neglected to declare in his last confession †. For such deeds men in those ages knew that when they died, to sulphurous and tormenting flames they would have to render up themselves. Visions of the saints, on their departing, were not uncommon. St. John of the Cross, immediately after his death, appeared to a Carmelite nun, and by his touch healed her of an infirmity which had long afflicted her. At the same moment he delivered a person of the town from the double death, and appeared soon after to two monks of the order, and also to his brother, Francis d'Yepes ‡.

Hear again the annals of Corby, in Saxony: "In 966, William, Archbishop of Mayence, in the night in which he died appeared in a vision to Luitholf, our abbot." In 1443, Mathias Quintel, a priest in Polle, after death, was seen by many in the fields and woods: he hurt no one, but exhorted all to penance §. Narrations of this kind on the lips of monks derived, it must be remembered, a charm from the context of the discourse: for they chiefly alluded to them in solemn and impressive moments, as connected with other things of more value, "when by moonlight sweetly and sadly they did talk of death." And if any one should wonder how such talk could yield a taste of sweetness, let him read Cæsar of Heisterbach's eleventh book, or the historical dialogue of Martinus, Abbot of the Scotch monastery at Vienna, in which he describes, as an eye witness, the deaths of monks in that cloister; and he will admit the justice of the poet's epithet. "I have heard, however, enough of this," says the

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* Dom Calmet sur les Apparitions, tom. i. p. 237.

† Bibliothec. Cluniacens. 1283.

‡ P. Dosithée, viii.

§ Annales Corb.

youth who converses with this very Abbot Martin, "and I want to hear something stranger still." The old man, finding him in such a vein, proceeds then to relate a demoniac vision which had assailed himself when he was a boy, hastening under the moon to school in winter while it was still night, according to the custom of some places, on account of the shortness of the days, which makes such early walks necessary to scholars. This youth, by his questions, seems already to be well fortified against such terrors; for he asks, "Why did you not make the sign of the holy cross? and then it would have disappeared, and you could have gone on to school without molestation *." Less conversant with such themes, we perhaps might wish, however, to have a little information on the subject; for, though we heard some remarks upon it in the eighth book, the traditions respecting it are so general in monasteries, that one ought not to lose such an opportunity as the present for satisfying the lurking curiosity to which we may be still liable. In the collection of illustrious and memorable histories by Cæsar of Heisterbach, Apollonius is represented saying, that, on the question of demonology, he would prefer hearing the testimony of monks to that of seculars †. And Marcilius Ficinus, writing to Soderinus, thus philosophizes on the fact, which really renders them the best authority on the subject: "Men, contemplative, despising human things, apply," he says, "either to religion and sanctity, or to science. Yet both fall into gulphs: for the saints, flying the vanities and deceits of mortals, fall into the temptation of demons; for they struggle, not against flesh and blood, says Paul the Apostle, sed adversus maleficos quosdam spiritus aëris caliginosi tyrannos. But what shall I say of the philosophers! While avoiding the business of Jove, and no less pleasure, they fall into the tedium and black bile of Saturn; to which mighty evil Democritus, Plato, Aristotle, and all the most ingenious men, are deemed obnoxious; so that they seem to suffer the punishment of that stealer of celestial fire, Prometheus, the contemplator on Mount Caucasus. Therefore, if these men, who seem of all others to have best escaped human

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* Senat. Dialog. Hist. Martini Abb. Scot. Vien. ap. Pez. Script. Rer. Aust. ii.

† Lib. v. c. iv.

calamities, fall into such misery, surely no one can hope to avoid evils in this mortal life. But there is this difference: that while the one proceed from bad to worse, the others, by persevering, reap the promises of God: for they who sow in tears reap in joy [*]."

No one in fact needs to be told how this theme pervades the monastic philosophy, as appears both from the paintings and the books of monks. These holy men, suffering from such assaults, have often addressed that Prince of the Air in words as sublime as those of Æschylus.

"That enemy from enemy should suffer
Extreme indignity, is nothing strange.
Let him then work his horrible pleasure on me;
Wreathe his black-curling flames, tempest the air
With vollied thunders and wild-warring winds,
Rend from its roots the firm earth's solid base,
Heave from the roaring main its boisterous waves
And dash them to the stars: me let him hurl,
Caught in the fiery tempest, to the gloom
Of deepest Tartarus: not all his pow'r
Can quench th' etherial breath of life in me [†]."

Do you ask, whence such combats in the very sanctuaries of peace? The ascetic replies, "that sinners, as a secure possession, are not tempted by the evil one; but that he tempts and vexes the faithful and devout." St. Thomas treats at great length on the temptation of men by demons, and states all the objections that can be alleged against it, refuting them, and proving how God permits it to be so [‡]. In the book of Job we see what power was given to Satan; and in the Holy Scriptures generally the texts are so numerous and clear, that no one who lays claim to any Christian faith can accuse the monks of superstition, in admitting and confirming by their own alleged experience the belief to which they lead. The human enemies of monks, however, imitate the very power whose existence they deny, in omitting all mention of the virtues to which these trials led: for when Satan was asked whence he came, he was silent respecting the constancy which he had found in holy Job. A modern historian, in order to illustrate what he terms the credulity of the German mind during the middle ages, cites some sublime legends from the work of Cæsarius of Heisterbach. I shall repeat one of these with a different object: for I conceive that it conveys a proof of the profound views and acute discernment of the monks, in teaching the real nature of those demoniac temptations to which men are subject, both in the cloister and in the world. "A priest," says the monk, "was one day in Lent hearing confessions in his church. While one by one they advanced and receded, a stout youth, who had taken his station with the rest, advanced the last of all, knelt down, and confessed so many and such monstrous crimes that the hair of the holy man stood on end. Rising from his seat, he exclaimed, 'Hast thou lived a thousand years to commit all these?' The other replied, 'I have lived more.' 'Who and what art thou?' demanded the confessor. 'A demon who fell with Lucifer,' was the reply. 'Why shouldst thou confess?' demanded the priest. 'As I stood here looking on,' continued the strange penitent, 'I perceived that some, who came to thee sinners, left thee justified. Diligently have I listened to their statements, and to thy replies promising pardon and bliss eternal. Hoping to obtain the same happiness, I too have approached thy chair.' The priest, soon recovering from his dismay, said coolly, 'If thou wilt follow my directions, and do penance for thy sins as sincerely as the rest, thou mayest obtain the same pardon.' The demon promised to perform any reasonable penance that should be tolerable. The priest assured him that it would be a very moderate one indeed,—far less than any which had been imposed on those who had preceded him: it would be simply this,—'Fall three times on thy face before Heaven, and say, 'Lord God, my Creator, I have sinned against thee; pardon thou me.' 'Impossible!' replied the devil, starting up; 'never can I stoop to such degradation. Enjoin me any thing else, and I will readily obey thee.' The priest bade him depart; and he vanished."

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[*] Epist. lib. xi.

[†] Prometh. Vinct.

[‡] Q. 114. ii.

But demonology appears under another form in the literature of the middle ages; and we must inquire how it came to pass that some monks should have been accused of being in alliance with the very powers which they were enlisted to combat. Having already seen how evil insinuated itself into monasteries, we have no occasion for entering upon any further explanation with respect to the abuses to which it led. Doubtless, as far at least as guilt was concerned, there were wizards under the cowl. Wibald, Abbot of New Corby, writes to Walter, a monk of that abbey, interdicting him from saying mass, forbidding him to converse with laics, or to leave the walls of the monastery, until, by his obedience and humility, it may be known what should be done. His offence was magic and sacrilege: for he used to say mass incessantly, with the diabolic intention of injuring his superiors; and he used charms and incantations. "O hominem omni lacrymarum imbre deflendum!" cries the abbot, "qui de fide perfidiam facit, de pietate sacrilegium, de religione idololatriam *." In the annals of Corby, in Saxony, we read, "This year, 1298, Gotschalk Marker, a painter, while painting the devil, was so terrified by a spectre that he soon after died." Who knows whether this was not another instance to verify what Cardan says, when, after speaking of the terrible apparitions to Cassius and Brutus, he adds, "I do not believe these to be ancient fables, or that other examples could not be found; for daily they occur; and I have known no impious man who wanted punishment of this sort †?"

In 1325, Leopold, Duke of Austria, asked a necromancer if he could show him the devil. ("I only repeat what is in old books," says the sage monk.) He replied that he could, but that it would endanger his body. A stipulation was made, and he was led into a secret room, and there shown a man seated. At the sight Leopold exclaimed, "Satis est!" and immediately dropped dead ‡. Fulbert of Chartres, in a sermon, relates the history of the man sold to the demon and delivered, which is represented in sculpture on the walls of Notre Dame, at Paris §. Dom Calmet may be consulted || respecting traditions of this kind, to which we alluded sufficiently on a former occasion. Of course, in general, such accusations against monks were utterly groundless, and the result either of malevolence or of superstition: to which last, it is a remarkable fact, that the enemies of monks were peculiarly, in all ages, prone. It was an observation made by Agobard, that the superstitious people who paid what

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* Ap. Martene, Vet. Script. ii. 350.

† De Utilitate ex Advers. i. 4.

‡ Erphurdianus, Antiquitatum Variloquus, ap. Menckenii Script. Rer. Germ. ii.

§ De Nativ. B. Virg. Serm.

|| Traité sur les Apparit. i. 39.

they called Canonicum, which was a tribute to the sorcerers who pretended to have power over the air, were precisely the very men who refused to pay tithes, or to give alms to the poor *. The charge of magic does not seem to have been advanced against the illustrious monk of Aurillac, Gerbert, till half a century after his death; and Hock supposes that it was the schismatical Cardinal Benno who first brought it forward, when he separated himself from Gregory VII. and the holy see. The first trace of it is found in the works of Sigebert, in 1113, and of Hugo of Flavigni, in 1100, who both give a false version of his leaving the monastery, and of his subsequent actions. Then followed Orderic Vitalis and William of Malmesbury, who improved further on the legend †. Bzovius gives the following apology for him by an old poet:—

"Ne mirare, Magum fatui quod inertia vulgi
Me (viri minime gnara) fuisse putat.
Archimedis studium quod eram Sophiæque sequutus
Tum, cum magna fuit gloria, scire nihil,
Credebant magicum esse rudes. Sed busta loquuntur
Quam pius, integer, et religiosus eram."

Others also published his vindication ‡. But still, among the credulous and ignorant, voices were found to perpetuate such calumnies, urging that—

"The sage, in truth, by dreadful abstinence,
And conquering penance of the mutinous flesh,
Deep contemplation, and unwearied study,
In years outstretch'd beyond the date of man,
May have obtain'd to sovereignty and science
Over those strong and secret things and thoughts
Which others fear and know not."

"I am not ignorant," says the Abbot Trithemius, "of the rumours which have been spread respecting my studies, and how often it has been said that I am addicted to necromantic vanities. I have therefore deemed it necessary for me to meet these calumnies, and leave

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[*] Agobard, De Grandine.

[†] Gerbert und sein Jahrhund. 161.

[‡] Sylvester II. Cæsius Aquitanus a Magia et aliis Calumniis Vindicatus, Rome, 1629. fol. attached to the Vita et Passio S. Adalberti Ursini.

a short defence of myself to posterity: for I am a faithful Christian, nourished in the Catholic faith, consenting to all things of faith according to the Roman Church. I am a priest and a monk, a minister of Jesus Christ. I have never had commerce with evil arts. I have never had any society with demons. One God in Trinity of Persons I adore, fear, and worship; to the participation of whose glory I hope to attain after this life. If the things I have known or done seem wonderful, they are not the works of demons, but of nature, but of industry, but of philosophic speculation. Now hear why I have been so distinguished. At the time when Maximilian, King of the Romans, held that great assembly at Worms, there came to me to the abbey of Spanheim a Frenchman named Libanius,—a man, profound in all kinds of learning, and no less venerable for sanctity and faith. He had conversed some time with that monk and hermit, Pelagius, in the island of Majorca; and, after his death, became heir of all his books. From him he had learned many hidden things in philosophy, on the Christian faith, on the nature of good and evil spirits, and on the mysteries of nature, and other things which are not common in the schools of men at this time. This learned Libanius, seeing my disposition and love of study, said that he thought me worthy of receiving all that he had learned, first from Pelagius, and then from John Picus, Count of Mirandula, during thirty years. So, beginning from the majesty of nature, he disputed on many points of wisdom and occult philosophy, and interpreted many things which were before unknown to me; by which I learned to distinguish between natural magic, which teaches how to do wondrous things by natural means, which the Church has never condemned; and that which is effected by the co-operation of malignant spirits, whether necromancy in the bodies of the dead, or piromancy by invocation of demons, or acromancy, hydromancy, geomancy, chiromancy, auruspices, auguries, auspices, pedomancy, orincomancy, sortelege, eromancy, or maleficy,—all which arts of demons are condemned by the holy Catholic Church, and forbidden to all Christians; though geomancy and chiromancy are not *in toto*, but may be tolerated in moderation, for exercise and recreation. But natural magic has been studied in all ages by holy men, as by Albertus Magnus. Magic is a Persian word, and signifies wisdom. The magicians are wise men. So far I am a magician,—that is, a lover of wisdom, divine, human, and natural. This is all my magic; but for the other condemned by the Church, I execrate, I abhor, I despise it, with its authors. At the instigation of a certain prince, (an unknown hand adds in the margin, Philip, Palatine of the Rhine,) I began to write that vast, arduous work, Steganographia, to be finished in eight books, of which I have only written two, being doubtful whether I shall proceed further, and fearing lest it may cause some to suspect me of evil arts. Perhaps it will be expedient for me that these wonderful things which I have invented should die and be buried with me, lest when I am dead, by those not understanding it, I should be accused of temerity or of superstition *."

But the monk's familiar conversation was not always on such solemn or wild-melancholy subjects. "Come hither, youth; and I will tell you what happened to me in my younger days, beginning from my boyhood." Such are the first words of the historical dialogue written by Martin, Abbot of the Scotch monastery at Vienna. "Truly," cries the other, "I will listen to you gladly †." There is nothing to alarm any one in such a commencement, nor would the sequel prove it a deception.

Rainauld, a monk of Ouches, says Orderic Vitalis, had lived in that abbey from the age of five, during fifty-two years, and under four abbots. He was remarkable for the gift of memory, which enabled him to relate exactly all that he had seen and heard. He often used to charm his companions by the agreeable recitals which he used to make, drawn either from the sacred books, or from the conversations of the learned ‡. "This year," (1252) says the annalist of Corby, "Hermann de Bodenhusen, a canon of Hilleshem, had long conversations often with our Abbot Tideric upon antiquities, in which he was very learned §."

You will wonder not, reader, that the monks of the middle ages should have had much to relate, if you consider through what vicissitudes many of them had come to this peace; for here were some "who," as Dante says,

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* Nepiachus, ap. Eccard. Corp. Hist. Med. Ævi, ii.

† Ap. Pez. Script. Rer. Aust. ii.

‡ Lib. iii.

§ Ap. Leibnitz, ii. Script. Brunsv.

"of all spirits had reviewed the state, from the world's lowest gap unto this height." Assuredly, without fear of disappointment, one might have conversed with a St. Louis, son of King James of Arragon, after he had renounced the promise of a crown, become a Franciscan friar, and retired into a convent in Germany, to be the farther removed from the honours due to his birth *; or with a St. William in the desert,—*πάλαι πολέμων εὖ εἰδώς*. Independently of their former position in the world, the immense journeys and pilgrimages of monks must have supplied them with innumerable themes. What a high pleasure would it have been to talk with Ingulf, Abbot of Croyland, in the time of King William, who had been first a monk of Fontanelles, though an Englishman, then secretary to the King, then a pilgrim to Jerusalem ; finally, during twenty-four years, Abbot of Croyland ! or with any of the generals and superiors of the mendicant orders, who were such great travellers ! with John the Teutonic, who had visited England, Ireland, Scotland, France, Italy, and Hungary ! or with a Humbert de Romans, another general of the Dominicans in the thirteenth century, who had held general chapters at Barcelona, Bologna, and London † ! Their studies, too, and their conversation with older monks, must have supplied them with many forgotten histories which lived in the eternal tablets, which they would deliver in such apt and gracious words, that aged ears might play truant at their tales, and younger hearings be quite ravished,—so sweet and voluble would be their discourse. Each abbey had curious, and often valuable histories attached to it, which were handed down from age to age. In Italy there existed ancient traditions of Attila, collected in works which Malespini had seen in the thirteenth century, in the abbey of Florence.

The work of Cæsar of Heisterbach will convey a good idea in general of the style of narratives that one heard in the monasteries of the middle ages. This monk had been educated at Cologne, and professed as a Cistercian, in 1199, in the monastery of St. Peter, at Heisterbach, which is near the bank of the Rhine opposite to Bonn. Let us hear one of his simple tales, which have, ere now, charmed many a listener under the abbey roof. It is a ditty, we might be disposed to think,

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* Annal. Min. v. 1295.

† Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. 3.

> " Not of these days, but long ago 'twas told
> By a cavern wind unto a forest old."

" Some five years ago," he says, " near the Abbey of Floreffia, in the diocese of Liege, lived a young nobleman, who, on his father's dying, inherited vast riches. The youth, becoming a knight, devoted himself to tournaments and actors, by which he was soon reduced to poverty, so that he sold all his estates. Near him dwelt a rich and honest knight, to whom he sold or mortgaged his lands; and when all his money was gone, he resolved to travel, preferring to beg among strangers than remain where he was known. He had a steward, who in name only was a Christian, being a wretch given to the demon. He, seeing his lord sad, said to him, ' Master, do you not wish to recover your riches?' ' Yes, truly,' replied the knight, ' provided I could do it without offending God.' ' Fear nothing, then,' said the other; ' only follow me.' So that same night he led him into a wood to a marshy spot, and there he began to talk as if with some one else. ' Who do you address?' asked the young man. ' Silence,' he replied; ' it does not concern you.' He resumed the conversation; and when the other again asked him, he said that he spoke with the demon. The youth began to tremble; and who would not have trembled at the sound of such cursed words, in such a place, and at such an hour? The youth could distinguish the voice replying, ' Then he must renounce the Most High.' So the steward told him to renounce God. He refused. ' What! do you fear to pronounce a mere word?' asked the steward. ' What is it but sound? Only say, I renounce.' The miserable youth repeated it after him. Then he could hear the voice say, ' He must also renounce the mother.' ' Never,' replied the youth; ' that is what I can never do.' ' What!' said the steward, ' do you shrink when you have done what is much greater? The Creator is something more than the creature, I opine.' ' No,' answered the youth; ' rather will I beg all the days of my life.' Nothing more was said, the work was left imperfect, and both proceeded to return. On their way back, they passed by a church, the door of which stood half open. The youth leaped from his horse, gave the bridle to the steward, and said, 'Wait here till I come to you.' He entered, prostrated himself before the altar, and invoked the prayers of the Mother of mercy. He wept, he groaned, he filled the whole church with his lamentations. Now the hour was about day-break, and, lo! the knight to whom he had made over his property came by that way, and seeing the church door open, and hearing the lamentations within, he concluded that mass was saying. So he entered, and saw the young knight weeping, and recognized him instantly. Thinking that he only wept for his calamities, he stepped behind a pillar, and waited to see the issue. Now there was over the altar an image of the Virgin Mother, holding the child Jesus in her arms; and the youth invoked her, and it seemed to him as if in heaven she joined her prayers with his, asking her Son to forgive him, and as if He, at length, consented, through love for his mother. The youth then rising went out of the church. The other knight followed him, and coming up, as if not knowing where he had been, asked him why his eyes were so wet and swelled? to whom the other replied, that it was the wind which had affected them. 'Nay, I know the cause,' said the knight; 'but be comforted. I have one only daughter, and if you will marry her, I will make you my heir.' The feelings of the other may be conceived. The knight related to his wife what had passed, and the marriage was soon after celebrated. They are all at present living, but the young man is to be the heir *."

Hugo of St. Victor relates a narrative no less wild, but from the character of the narrator it acquires a peculiar interest.

"A certain brother of approved testimony," he says, "related to me what had been told him by his own abbot, who on one occasion going to visit certain monks, while on the journey took up his lodging for the night in a certain hostel, where he learned the fact which had occurred there a few days before. A strange pilgrim, going for the sake of prayer to St. James, was received there to hospitality. That night, before the dawn, as is the custom with travellers, he rose, and leaving the vil-

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* Id. lib. ii. c. 12.

lage, entered into a wood which was adjacent. There, being separated from his companions owing to the darkness, he began to deviate from the way, and after proceeding on some time, met a man of venerable habit and countenance, who, in answer to his interrogations, informed him that he was St. James, and that he was come to meet him on the way to praise his devout intentions. He then proceeded to speak of the reward prepared for him, and of the miseries of this life, and with such force that he not only quite took away the fear of death from the pilgrim, but even persuaded him that it would be wise and meritorious to put an end to his life by his own hands. The unhappy pilgrim, deceived by this demon, attempted to destroy himself; but being discovered by his companions, he was brought back to the hostel, where, on suspicion of having assassinated him, the host was arrested and accused. The man, however, who was thought dead, recovered, and he then confessed the whole history, adding, that it appeared to him as if the wicked angel who had deceived him, while carrying him away to torment, was met by the real St. James, who obliged him to let go his hold, and that he was then permitted to have a vision of the other world, which he could not describe by any words *."

The spirit from whose lip these wild narratives proceed might win us easily to listen still; but having in memory the scowl of certain persons born near the dull-making cataract of Nilus, let us ask the good father for legends less poetical, that none may incur blame for repeating his discourse.

Well, then, we may take back this report, that never does the poor old monk indulge in telling histories without an especial view to inculcate some great practical lesson, and, above all, charity. Let these next tales bear witness. "Two citizens of Cologne," says Cæsar of Heisterbach, "confessed in Lent that they were guilty of lying and perjury. 'We cannot buy or sell any thing,' said they, 'without lying, swearing, and often perjury.' 'These,' said the priest, 'are grievous sins, prohibited by our Lord.' 'Then we cannot observe his precept in trade,' said they. 'Follow my advice,' replied the priest.

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* Eruditiones Theologicæ De Sacramentis, lib. ii. par. xvi. c. 2.

'Try it for one year.' They agreed to do so. Now Satan, ever opposed to human salvation, contrived that they should sell nothing: so at the end of the year they returned to the priest, and said, 'Our obedience has cost us dear. We cannot carry on business without oaths.' 'Fear not,' said the priest. 'It is a temptation. Resolve never to offend God this way, whatever may be the consequence.' They promised it. Wondrous thing! The temptation ceased, and from that hour men flocked to their shops more than to any other, and they soon prospered *." Now hear how he teaches us by a true tale to commiserate the poor.

"In the year 1192 it happened on a certain day that Rocherus, a man of high dignity in the church at Magdeburg, was playing at chess, when a servant-boy entered, and whispered to the butler, who stood near, that a poor sick woman had sent a messenger to ask for a little wine. Rocherus, overhearing him, ordered that the wine should be given immediately: and on the servant answering that he had no wine excepting what was in a vessel that had not yet been opened, he ordered him to open it. The servant went out, as if intending to comply, but in reality he sent away the messenger empty. Scarcely two hours had elapsed, when the church bells tolled for a death. Rocherus sent to inquire the name of the person, and the messenger brought word that it was the woman who had so lately sent for wine. Then he inquired minutely, and discovered that it had not been given. Greatly troubled, he summoned the servant to appear, and with vehement indignation commanded him to empty the entire hogshead upon the ground, declaring that he would never make use of that, of which a part had been refused to one of the poor of Christ. Then he dismissed the man, and forbade him ever after to enter his presence."

Nor was the cloister left without domestic traditions appertaining to families in the world, for each monk brought to it some history of this kind from his home, which had often the charm of an exquisite tenderness. How many sweet tales could Henry Suso, the Dominican, relate of his own mother, to whose pious memory he was so attached, that renouncing the illustrious name of his father, Dumon, who was a worldling, he chose to

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* Id. lib. iii. c. 38.

be called Suso, after her, during the thirty-seven years of his evangelizing Germany, from the year 1328, when he entered the convent of Constance, till his death at Ulm in 1365 *.

"I should like to know, were your parents devout?" asks the youth in the historical dialogue of Martinus, the Austrian abbot; to whom the old monk replies, "I ought not to speak of that; yet one thing I will relate of my father. Once on a Good Friday he came back from the church very ill, so ill that my mother and I, and all the family, began to despair of his recovery; and when we lamented over him, he said to us, 'Weep not, for I asked the Lord that He would deign this day by some infirmity to make me participator of his passion, and I am grateful that my prayer has been heard †.'"

But these effusions of intimacy must cease at the tolling of the bell. Indeed even Homer himself might read us a lesson in this respect; for Ulysses stops suddenly in the most solemn part of his narrative, and says it is time for retiring to sleep, and that he must depart on the morrow ‡. I know not whether my reader, like Alcinous, would wish to protract the conversation, saying,

> *νὺξ δ' ἥδε μάλα μακρὴ ἀθέσφατος· οὐδέ πω ὥρη*
> *εὕδειν ἐν μεγάρῳ· σὺ δέ μοι λέγε θέσκελα ἔργα* §,

but I am sure that the guest of the middle ages, whether young or old, so far from disdaining even these familiar narratives, would apply to them the words of the ascetic with whom he had begun this conversation,—"Non sunt frigida verba, nisi non amanti: nec surda organa, nisi cor obturanti. Scit amans et flagrans anima, et toties intra se concalescit cor ejus, quoties ex amore æternæ pacis compungitur."

CHAPTER XVII.

We came within these cloisters, let it be remembered, reader, in search of further proof that there were multitudes in the middle ages who loved peace, and who, through that love, were happy. Thus far, methinks, our observations justify our first report, although, as yet, they have been chiefly general: but now I would impart to them a direction more especial, and interrogate the monks, that from their answers we may learn as fully as if we had long dwelt amongst them, what fruits of peace were yielded by the monastic institution.

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* Touron, ii. 13.

† Dialog. Hist. ap. Pez. Script. Rer. Aust. ii.

‡ Od. xi.

§ xi.

But, first, what say these strangers in the guest-chamber, like ourselves, some of whom can but ill disguise their jealousy? "It is a sweet life to be in a monastery after spending one's youth in battles," says one. "Every thing here," he continues, "speaks to the imagination. The loud-tolling bell, the solemn organ, the chaunt of matins, resounding under these long vaulted aisles *." He speaks maliciously, but so far his observations are just. Another of a similar school, describing the Carthusian monastery near Valentia, called Porta Celi, indicates, however, more discernment of the true advantages of monastic seclusion, for he says, "Every thing there nourishes the peace of the soul. Though one may have held the monastic life in aversion, it will be impossible not to feel an interest in these silent solitaries, who at least do not neglect the benefits which nature has spread round their dwelling, and who, austere for themselves only, peaceably laborious, do not even merit the charge of being useless. In their cemetery, shaded by palm trees, and embalmed with roses, the idea of death seems stripped of its terrors." This is still the testimony of one who comes from a hostile camp; but if we consult any young unprejudiced observer, we shall find that he can discover at a glance the leading characteristic of monastic life. Thus a recent traveller, describing the union among the monks in the convent of St. John the Baptist, near Jerusalem, says, "You see different countenances, some more gay, others more reserved, in fine, the varieties which must exist in all assemblies of men; but here you find in all that peace of heart, and that innocent joy, which result from a tranquil conscience, and a life removed from the cares of this world †."

But now, in fine, what say the monks themselves? Unquestionably they will yield a cheerful assent to the first speaker, and plead guilty of leading a sweet life.

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* Capefigue.

† Delaroière, Voyage en Orient.

St. Bernard is almost ravished with the beauty and pleasures of his monastery. "Good God," saith he, describing it, "what an aggregation of pleasures hast thou provided for the poor! Deus bone! quanta pauperibus procuras solatia!" "In this porch of Paradise," he says elsewhere, "the voice of a divine whisper is heard, a most holy and most secret counsel, which is hidden from the wise and prudent, and revealed to little ones *." Bernard, the Abbot of another monastery, writing to the saint, bears the same testimony after visiting him. "Man, when he was in honour, did not understand, which sentence is verified in wretched me," he says to him; "for I did not sufficiently understand, when I was in Clairvaux, that I was in a place of pleasure, between trees of Paradise; and therefore I counted for nothing the desirable land †." St. Peter Damian says, that the monastery of Cluny "is a garden of delights, producing all the graces of which roses and lilies are the symbol." What else is the Cluniac monastery, but a field of the Lord, full of things celestial, where they are in profusion ‡? A certain canon regular, writing to the monks of St. Barbara in Normandy, to describe the manners of the Præmonstratensian monks, after enumerating many excellences, adds, "With them existed that one principal and singular good of concord and unanimity, every one supporting the other in charity §." All the great and acute observers of monastic life in ages of faith corroborate these testimonies. To Mount Cassino Charlemagne, who so loved its holy family, addresses this epistle,—

> "Hinc celer egrediens facili mea carta volatu .
> Per silvas, colles, valles quoque perpete cursu,
> Alma Deo cari Benedicti tecta requie,
> Est nam certa quies fessis venientibus illuc.
> Hic olus hospitibus, piscis, hic panis abundat,
> Pax pia, mens humilis, pulchra et concordia fratrum,
> Laus, amor, et cultus Christi simul omnibus horis.
> Dic Patri et Sociis cunctis, salvete, valete,
> Colla mei Pauli gaudendo amplecto benigne
> Dicito multoties, salve, Pater Optime, salve ||."

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* De Conversione, c. 14.

† S. Bern. Epist. 344.

‡ Epist. v.

§ Ap. Martene, i. 780.

|| Chronic. S. Monast. Casinens. c. xv.

St. Peter Damian says of these monks, "Blessed are they who live with you, blessed are they who die amongst you in your holy works * ;" and Isidore, who translated the tract of St. Nilus on the Christian philosophy, says, in his Preface, to the monk Ambrose of Florence, "Last year, while staying at that mount, or rather paradise of Cassino †, Rothrod, Archbishop of Rouen, being invited by the monks of La Charité to seek rest with them in time of war, after replying that he cannot be absent from his flock, continues thus: 'To converse with you, we count beatitude and the image of another paradise. Nothing more renders bitter our present troubles than the memory of that peace which we enjoyed within your cloister, conversing with you as with angels. If we cannot bring about peace, at least we must beseech God for the things of peace. Implore him, brethren, to reduce to peace the tumult of the present discord ‡.'"

The anonymous monk of Ratisbon says, "that he returned thanks to God for the charity and peace which he enjoyed while residing in the monastery of Fulda; 'Magnum quippe mihi tunc videbatur, in eodem monasterio pacifico incessu posse deambulare §;' that monastery, under the Abbot Eigil, was described by his disciple as enjoying profound internal peace." The brethren, in happy tranquillity, have one heart and one mind in God ||.

Neckham, Abbot of Cirencester in 1217, speaking of his juvenile years in the abbey of St. Alban, bears testimony to it in these lines:

"——— Claustrum
Martyris Albani, sit tibi tuta quies!
Hic locus ætatis nostræ primordia novit,
Annos felices, lætitiæque dies!
Hic locus ingenuis pueriles imbuit annos
Artibus, et nostræ laudis origo fuit.
Hic locus insignes magnosque creavit alumnos.
Felix eximio martyre, gente, situ,
Militat hic Christo, noctuque dieque labori
Indulget sancto religiosa cohors ¶."

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* Hist. Casinens. sæc. vi.

† Ap. Martene Vet. Script. tom. ix.

‡ Pet. Bles. Epist. clv.

§ Ap. Mabillon, Vet. Analect. iv.

|| Præf. in iv. sæc. Benedict. 6.

¶ De Laude Divinæ Sapientiæ.

Some time after Peter of Blois had visited Croyland, the abbot wrote to him to request that he would undertake to write a continuation of their annals, promising to send him the materials. The archdeacon, in reply, takes occasion to extol the happiness of that community. "While with you lately," he says, "I was refreshed with so many delights, enriched with so many presents, edified by so many devout exercises, that being called away on the king's service, I was troubled in spirit, and afflicted to such a degree, that as long as I live I shall have your countenances, and the persons of each of you, as it were, painted before me. Calling to mind the urbanity with which you received me, which seems indigenous in the place itself, I was so affected with a womanish tenderness, that before I reached the firm land, seven or more times did I pull my reins, and look back from the midst of the marsh to gaze again on your most holy monastery, and bless it from my heart, and grieve for myself, like Adam when exiled from Paradise *." Orderic Vitalis, concluding his history, testifies the peace and happiness he has reaped in his monastery. "It is time to finish this book," he says: "in fact, I have passed sixty-seven years of my life in the worship of my Lord Jesus Christ; and while I have seen the great men of the world overthrown by terrible misfortunes, and the most distressing evils, I am, thanks to God, strong in the security which my submission gives to me, and in the joy which I owe to my poverty. Lo, there is Stephen, King of England, kept mourning in prison, and Louis, King of France, a prey to torments of various kinds, in expeditions against the Goths and Gascons. What shall I add? Almighty God, supreme King, I render thee thanks for having disposed of my years according to the good pleasure of thy will. Baptized at Attingham, on the Severn, on the Saturday of Easter, by the curate Orderic, whose name was given to me, I was sent, in the fifth year of my age to Shrewsbury school, where I offered my first services in the Basilica of Saints Peter and Paul. There, during five years instructed in Latin by the illustrious priest Siegward, I was made familiar with the Psalms and Hymns, and other necessary studies. But

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* Pet. Bles. Continuatio ad Hist. Ingulphi in Rer. Ang. Script. tom. i.

thou didst not wish that I should remain in the midst of parents and relations, lest mundane affections should cause an obstacle to my observance of thy law. Therefore, thou, who didst send Abraham from his country, didst inspire my father Odelir with the design of offering me to thee wholly. Bathed in tears, he committed me to the monk Rainauld, and sent me away an exile for thy sake, since which hour I have never seen him more. Young and weak child, I had no wish to oppose him, for he told me, that if I became a monk I should have after my death Paradise with the just. Thus did I abandon my country, my parents, and my friends, who all wished me farewell with tears in their eyes, recommending me with affectionate prayers to thee, O my God, O supreme Adonai! I was ten years old when I passed the seas, and arrived in Normandy, unknowing and unknown. As Joseph in Egypt, I heard a language that I understood not. Nevertheless, assisted by thy grace, I met with from strangers all the gentleness and friendship that I could desire. The venerable Mainier, Abbot of the monastery of Ouches, admitted me to the monastic state in the eleventh year of my age. He substituted the name of Vital for my English name, which seemed barbarous to the Normans, borrowing this name from one of the companions of St. Maurice, whose festival was that day celebrated. Thanks to thy favour, I have remained in this convent fifty-six years, loved and honoured by all my brethren and fellow-countrymen far beyond my deserts. I have revered as my fathers and masters, because they were thy vicars, the six abbots, Mainier, Serlon, Roger, Guerin, Richard, and Ranulf. They have governed legitimately the monastery of Ouches: they have watched, as if they had to render an account for me and for the others: they have used their ability within and without; and under thy eyes, and with thy assistance, they have procured us what was necessary; and since thirty-four years I have fulfilled faithfully the holy ministry of priesthood in all the joy of my heart. Thus hast thou made me to live, O Lord God: thus gratuitously hast thou lavished thy gifts upon me. For all thy benefits, O tender Father, I yield thee thanks, I praise and bless thee with all my heart, and with tears in my eyes I implore thy mercy for my innumerable sins *."

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* Lib. xiii.

Finally, extending their observations beyond themselves and their own community, the monks express a profound conviction of the immense advantages, in regard to peace in general, which resulted from the monastic state. Many abbeys were called "the gate of heaven," and rightly, if we receive the evidence of those who knew what was the life within them; for, as a modern philosopher says, "Certainly it is heaven upon earth to have a man's mind move in charity, rest in providence, and turn upon the poles of truth." "O how happy is the life of monks," cries Alcuin, addressing the brethren of Salzburg; "life, pleasing to God, lovely to the angels, honourable to men *." "For a man of good manners," says Brother Francis Antonio Guevara, "the tranquillity of a monastery constitutes another Paradise. Certes, if one reflects well, there is no peace under heaven equal to that of being in company with good men, praying to God with them †." It was there one saw clearly verified the song of the church. "For the testament of the Lord, and the laws of their fathers, did the saints of God persist in the love of fraternity, because there was always in them one spirit and one faith."

This love of fraternity, this expansion of heart towards all men, did not exclude the enjoyment of friendship in its more common acceptation, for in the cloister graces did not counteract each other. "Nor is such love," says the Abbot Suger, "repugnant to charity, since He who commands us to love our enemies does not forbid us to love our friends ‡." Peter of Blois remarks, that St. Paul, when he came to Troad, says he had no rest for his spirit till he had found Titus his brother; and again, when he came into Macedonia, that his flesh had no rest till He, who consoles the humble, consoled him in the coming of Titus §. Gerbert, writing to his old Abbot Raimund, thanking him for his long friendship, adds, "What else is true friendship but an eminent gift of the Divinity: quid est aliud vera amicitia nisi Divinitatis præcipuum munus || ?" Hence Sigebert, Abbot of Gemblour, says, "that im-

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* Epist. 20, ap. Canis. Lect. Antiq. 11.

† Epitres, 11.

‡ In Vit. Ludov. vi. ap. Duchesne, iv.

§ De Amicitia Christiana, 21.

|| Gerberti Epist. 29.

mense thanks should be returned to God for providing such delight for men as is furnished by epistolary correspondence *." "Leave me then," the monk would say, with a modern author, "the memory of all my friends, even of the ungrateful. They must remind me of some kind feeling; and perhaps of theirs; and for that very reason they deserve another." But this phrase indicates the experience of the world in its present state of civilization; for the same writer says, "A friend is a creature now extinct: we read of its petrified bones in distant regions." Within the cloister, where, "true to themselves, monks could not be false to any man;" and in the Catholic society, which faith had animated, we meet with no complaints of this kind. To discover them we must go back to the days of Paganism, when Cicero said that scarcely three or four pair of friends could be found in all the past ages. "But let no one wonder," adds Peter of Blois, "that there were few friends among the heathens; for they knew not Him who is love, whose charity is diffused through our hearts by the Holy Spirit which is given to us. But since the voice of the turtle has been heard in our land, the voice of Him announcing peace, announcing the truth of friendship, and saying, 'This is my commandment, that ye love one another;' many thousands of men have contracted true friendships, loving each other more truly, certainly, prudently, and with more force than Pylades and Orestes. How many thousands have had but one heart and one mind, and how many have laid down their lives for their friends and brethren in Christ †."

"It is gratifying to find," says a modern historian, "that the best human affections can subsist in the cloister: perhaps there they exist in their greatest intensity; for there the rivalry of the passions is not to be found—none of the jealousies, or misconceptions, or caprices, which beset men amidst the busy scenes of the world ‡." Where facts seem to contradict this judgment, St. Bernard supplies the explanation, saying, "Neque hoc facit stupor, sed amor; submittitur sensus, non amittitur;

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* Ap. Martene, Vet. Script. tom. i. 936.

† De Amicit. Christ. c. 11.

‡ Europe in Mid. Ages, Encyclopæd. ii. 174.

nec deest dolor, sed superatur, sed contemnitur *." But let us now behold this creature living, which in the world men affirm has been so long extinct; for it is not in a fossil state that friends among monks were found, but in all the freshness of a new creation—

"Reaping immortal fruits of joy and love,
Uninterrupted joy, unrivall'd love,
In blissful solitude."

What deep affection subsisted between St. Francis and that Bernard Quintavalle whom he first sent to preach, and whom he so lovingly invited to be present at his death? "Dear to him also," he used to say, "were the simplicity and purity of brother Leon, the good nature of brother Angelo of Rietti, who had been a knight in the world; the gracious look, natural science, and devout conversation of brother Mace; the contemplative elevation of brother Gilles; the spirit of prayer of brother Ruffinus; the patience of brother Junipere; the laborious activity of brother John of Landes; the charity of brother Roger, and the solicitude of brother Lucide †." Many followed their friends to the cloister or the desert, and assumed the habit at their suggestion. Erluin, Abbot of Gemblou, in the middle of the tenth century was attached, by divine dispensation, in bonds of closest friendship with one of the most noble men of the age, Guibert; insomuch that "unum vellent et unum nollent in Domino." Nevertheless, he believed that much was wanting to him when he alone had withdrawn his feet from the vanity of the world, because the other part of his soul, the pious Guibert, was still held fast in the mire of the profane world. Desiring, therefore, that his friend Guibert should truly and perpetually rejoice in the Lord, he burnt with all the ardour of his mind to win him to the Lord, and he directed all the grace of friendship to effect the salvation of his soul: nor did he rest until he had drawn him from out of the mundane lake of misery, and had placed him upon the rock of ecclesiastical conversation; and had directed his feet in the ways of justice; and had put a new hymn of divine praise in his mouth.

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* Serm. 61 in Cant.

† Diego de Navarre les Chroniques des Frères Min. liv. 11. c. 51.

Ever afterwards he was his strenuous instructor and advocate in all times of difficulty [*].”

Celebrated was the friendship of those illustrious hermits of Venda, Albericus de Burgo-ricco and Stephen de Tremignone, who retired together to the desert of Camaldoli, where, leading a most holy eremetical life during thirty-two years, they passed to eternal peace, with only forty-six days intervening between each other's death, in 1241 [†].

When Eckehard III. died, who had been dean in the abbey of St. Gall for thirty years, Wickard threw himself on the dead body, and, through sorrow, gave up the ghost [‡]. When Peter the Venerable died, the grief of the monks of Cluny was so poignant that no common mode of expressing sorrow sufficed to them. They kissed his face, and drank the water with which they had washed his body; and each endeavoured to carry off some of it to preserve as a memorial of the man he loved so brotherly [§].

This intense affection of monks for their superiors, or brethren, may be witnessed also in those old paintings which represent death or funerals within the cloister, amidst the tears of the community; as that by Angelico de Fiesoli, of the death of St. Dominic; or that of the death of St. Clare by Murillo; or that by Pedro de Cordova, in the Louvre, of an old monk carried to his burial, scenes of surpassing tenderness! still witnessed within religious houses, as I can testify, after assisting at the obsequies of the venerable Marguerite de Lezeau in her convent of the Mother of God, in Paris; at whose requiem several, through sorrow, fainting, fell like corses to the ground; while sighs, with lamentations and loud moans, with hands together smote, made such an accompaniment to the sweet voices who sung around her, that the sound thrills me yet.

What affectionate friends were seen in the abbey of Mount Cassino, when St. Maur and his brethren departed from it to proceed into France! An analogous scene occurred in the abbey of St. Victor at Paris, which is thus described. It being resolved that regular canons should be placed in the abbey of St. Geneviève, when Suger was conducting the reform of that house, that holy abbot, with some religious men, went to the abbey of St. Victor to demand assistance. "We forgot nothing," says Suger, writing an account to the pope, "to persuade the venerable abbot of that monastery that it was the will of God he should succour the church of St. Geneviève. We conjured him, both in private and before the whole community, with all imaginable earnestness, but without effect; because, being prudent and wise, he feared to weaken his own house in helping another: but when he saw that we asked even for his prior, a man of rare merit, to be the new Abbot of St. Geneviève, he was still more troubled; for then he began to weep, and to sob with such force, that he moved our pity. 'You wish then to take my life,' said he, 'at my age, loaded with years and infirmities; I cannot do without my prior: no, I can never consent to it.' This was his answer during the entire day; but at length, as night came on, and we still pressed him as we had done, without intermission, from the morning, and interposed the authority of your holiness, he consented; and, preferring the general good of the church to his own, promised us his prior and twelve of the canons, all men of great merit *."

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[*] Libell. de Gestis Abb. Gemblacens. ap. Dacher. Spicileg. vi.

[†] Annal. Camald. lib. xl.

[‡] Necrolog. S. Galli, 21 Martii.

[‡] Chronic. Cluniacens.

If we desire to single out some eminent example of one who cherished friendship in the cowl, we may distinguish the illustrious monk of Aurillac, Gerbert, whose correspondence with the abbots and brethren of different monasteries is more concerned with the interests of deep private affection than even the peaceful occupations of a learned life. Writing to Constantine the scholastic, he says, "Vis amicitiæ pene impossibilia redigit ad possibilia. For how should I have undertaken to explain the reasons of numbers unless by your exhortation, O my sweet consolation in labour, Constantine †!" Writing to the Abbot of Aurillac and the brethren: "In common indeed to you all," he says, "I return my thanks, but especially to Father Raimund; to whom, after God, if there be any degree of science in me, I am above all men indebted. And now farewell, holy college; farewell, my acquaintances, and those joined with me in affinity; and

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* Hist. de Suger, liv. vi.

† Epist. 161.

if there should be any remaining whom I have not known sufficiently, or only by their appearance; whom I have neglected, not through any pride, but from being torn, and, if I may so speak, altogether changed by the ferocity of the barbarians. What I learned when a boy I lost when a young man; and what I desired when a young man I despise in my old age. Such are the fruits I have reaped! O pleasure! Such are the joys which the honours of this world bring forth! Trust, therefore, my experience. In proportion as glory exalts princes externally, does the interior torment prey upon them." His object in thus writing to these ancient friends is to implore their prayers *. With the most fervent affection did he love his director in Aurillac, the Abbot Gerald, his instructor Raimund, the monks Airard, Bernhard, and the others. In every passage of his life, in his contests at Bobbio, at Rheims, on the funeral of King Lothaire, in the power of his betrayers, after his own election, and at the court of the emperor, he still ever thinks of them, greets them, sends them presents, and recommends himself to their prayers. With what warmth does he defend the interest of his friend Constantine in Fleury! How solicitous does he continue to show himself for the monk Rainaud in Bobbio; consoling, advising, and assisting him! With restless zeal he serves his Adalbero; until, on his death-bed, he is his companion, his servant, his counsellor, his champion! Extending his friendships beyond the cloister to the house of Otho, in misfortune as in prosperity, he evinces the same love. Over the third Otho he watches as a father over his child; and the severest blow of all he ever felt, which he receives as the signal for his own departure from the troubled scene, is Otho's death. The loss of the young emperor, who died at Paterno in 1002, was a wound from which he never recovered. He had seen pass three generations of great rulers, whom he had personally loved; having followed to the grave the last Charles, and the last of the Othos, with whom his friendships died. His letters, his public acts cease at this period. He expired on the 12th of May, 1003, and was buried under the portico

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* Epist. 35.

of the church of St. John Laterun. Pope Sergius IV., the third of his successors, wrote his epitaph, beginning,

> "Iste locus mundi Sylvestri membra sepulti
> Venturo Domino conferet ad sonitum:"

and ending with

> "Quisquis ad hunc tumulum devexa lumina vertis,
> Omnipotens Domine, dic, miserere sui *!"

Thus fervently did men learn to love their friends in the sanctified retirement of the cloister: and if they continued to practise these lessons so zealously when removed from it to the dizzy and distracted scene of common life, what must have been their friendships within the monastery, while inhabiting the house of peace together! "When we were youths we began to love each other in Christ," says Peter the Venerable to St. Bernard; "and now that we are old, shall we doubt of our love, so sacred, of such long-standing? Far be it from us †."

The monk of Mount Cassino, who composed the history of the Normans, speaking of the Abbot Desiderius, says, "I wish that I may die in the time of this holy abbot, and that he may live after I am dead, and that he at the last day of my life, may give me the absolution of my sins ‡." "Ask Severus, if you desire to know any thing of his monastic life," says Paschasius to Adeodatus in that curious dialogue, which contains the history of the Abbot Wala. When Severus replies, "Brethren, brethren, what shall I say, or where shall I find words, since nothing remains to me of him, unless the power of tears and sorrow, for it was good for me, when with him I was carrying the yoke of my youth, as if solitary before him, and was silent rather than now, when I have permission to speak of him. O good Lord Jesus, how indefatigable didst thou make him in all offices of love! how strenuous, how efficacious, how devout."

Richard, a monk of St. Remi, having removed to Canterbury, in which monastery he was living at the time of

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* Hock.

† S. Bern. Epist. 389.

‡ L'Ystoire de li Normant, lib. iii. c. 49.

the martyrdom of St. Thomas, Petrus Cellensis, his former abbot, writes to him in these terms, "Behold, my dearest Richard, I would rush to embrace you on hearing of this change of your habit, though it can hardly change your mind for the better; for what attribute of decorum, what of maturity, what of piety, what of charity, what of all religion, was wanting to you when you were before me, and in the eyes of our congregation, a mirror of goodness and a model of imitation? Had you remained with us, you would have been a comfort to me against all troubles, nor do I think that God would have deserted me as long as I possessed such a pledge of his mercy; but what has happened, has happened. This absence of the body must only be a stimulus to greater friendship, and dictate more continuance of prayer *." A monk of St. Victor writes to his friend as follows: "Hearing, my beloved, that you are living well, and in health, that you prosper in all things, that you please God and men in your manners, and that you are glad to hear accounts of me as your relative, I rejoiced with great joy, and though dead to the world in regard to its affections in this respect, I confess I am not wholly free; yet this is the gift not of the world, but rather of charity, which, as it renders sometimes your pious breast solicitous about me as your relation, so also it affects me with cares for you as my relation. From which as I am now in part delivered, thanks be to God, it only remains that I should exonerate myself by sending a letter in return. So then at Paris, having put my hand to the Lord's plough in the house of God, and of blessed Victor, under the canonical rule of St. Augustin, as a pupil, I have decreed to militate for Christ, to serve whom is to reign, to be restrained by whose bridle is perfect liberty, where I live, yet not I, but Christ who dwelleth in me; where the world to me is crucified, as am I to the world; not seeking there the things which are mine, but those which are Christ's; and this is my glory, to will and to be able to please God. Do you desire to hear greater and sublimer things of me? Lo I consult my memory, and I know nothing; I can find nothing; but what shall I say? more, and as if greater things I promised, and so I am reduced to nothing; and nothing

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* Pet. Cellens. Epist. lib. v. 14.

know; or is it perchance, that thus to have descended, is rather to have ascended, as it is written, "qui se humiliat exaltabitur;" for he is truly humble who had rather be reputed vile, than pronounced humble? but enough of this. It remains that I reveal to you my secret and ardent desire. If by your means I could procure any particle of the relics of the glorious martyr of Christ, St. Thomas; for that would be to me a treasure more precious than gold and topaze, that would be a companion and a consoler in my pilgrimage, a sweet guardian against the temptations of the insidious enemy. If you should be able, hasten to send it to me in a sealed vase, and by some trusty messenger. Farewell[*]." Monastic superiors had as many friends as subjects. When Thomas, the venerable Abbot of Croyland, became blind, which calamity he bore with cheerfulness and humility, the monks so loved him that they prevailed on him to retain his pastoral dignity till his death, and he governed them in that state five years[†].

When Ambrose of Camaldoli in 1431 was to remove from his monastery in Florence, by order of Pope Eugene, on being made prior general of the order, which office required him to visit distant provinces, he describes his departure thus: "So I Ambrose, then subprior, and Silvester, my sweetest companion, with whom I had passed thirty years in that monastery, were obliged to set out. We left the monastery on the 11th of October, while the brethren were singing vespers, lest any thing of disturbance should arise from their tears and lamentations[‡]."

Indications of the most tender love and amiable sympathy for all members of their respective houses, abound in the writings of the monks. Hugo, of St. Victor, supplies an instance. "I am invited out," he says, "and I am enjoined under obedience, to become a guest with strangers. I ride forth and arrive at their house. I sit down at table. White bread and good wine, fish, and cheese, and eggs are produced. Then I begin to think of my brethren who are in the convent, and it is grievous to me to be treated differently from them, and to think that I should be feasting splendidly while they are only dryly supporting nature. My conscience smites me if I have fish instead of beans, and cheese instead of onions or millet *."

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[*] Vetera Monumenta Monast. S. Victoris ap. Martene, Vet. Script. tom. vi.

[†] Hist. Croyl.

[‡] Annal. Camaldulens. lib. lxii.

For seculars too, as we remarked in the instance of Gerbert, they manifest friendship with no less fervour and familiarity. Guevara, the Franciscan, writes to a Spanish nobleman in these terms: "Illustrious Seigneur, if you think that I am not your friend, you err; for your friends and mine know that Don Fernando, of Cordova, Clavaire de Calatrava, and brother Antonio de Guevara, are two bodies with one will, united by an indissoluble bond of friendship." The mourning of monks on the death of friends has left many traces in their writings. The grief of St. Bernard on losing his brother Gerard, dictated one of the most affecting epistles that was ever written, from which St. Bernardine, of Sienna, borrowed certain passages when lamenting the death of his own friend, the blessed Vincent of Sienna †. The internal combat between joy and sorrow, which the monks endured on occasion of recalling the memory of friends, is beautifully expressed by St. Hilary, when preaching the funeral sermon of his friend St. Honoré. "Talem reminisci dulce est, tali carere supplicium." It was the custom at Clairvaux, for the monks not to leave the interior of the monastery after the last sacraments had been administered to any brother, until after his burial or recovery ‡. The sorrows of friendship, perhaps, were never expressed in more affecting words than in those of St. Peter the Venerable, when he heard of the death of many of his monks, and addressed the survivors in the following epistle, in which he styles himself, not so much their abbot as their servant.

"I have heard," he says, "my dearly beloved, that the hand of the Lord hath touched you, that many and precious members of our body have been cut off by the sword of divine judgment, that the living fall upon the dead, that youths and old men are carried off in equal numbers; that little boys precede to the grave men of a

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* De Anima, lib. iii. c. 36.

† Annal. Min. tom. xi.

‡ Voyage Lit. de Deux Bénéd.

hundred years of age. We who are left suffer intense affliction, from being deprived of so many useful holy brothers; all have matter for sorrow; but I more especially; for who else has such cause for lamentation and tears? What father is there of so iron a nature, as not to be filled with anguish at the death, I do not say of so many chosen, but of one only son? and what father could ever be so great a debtor to his sons, as I am to you? for what father has ever found in his carnal sons such obedience, such sincere love, such prompt obsequiousness as I have in you? Who has ever had such sweet experience of affection as I have received from you? If I had to pass the Alps of Italy or Spain, you always went with me in mind and affection. If, as often happened, I visited Rome, you adhered inseparably to me. If I had to cross the seas, you sailed along with me in heart, in devotion, and in prayers. If I was sick, you became infirm with me in grief and compassion of mind. Without you I could never labour or make head against dangers: how could I therefore see such dear friends torn from me without feeling the most profound grief of heart? The former ages seem to have returned, and the angel of the Lord appears to have stretched forth his hand over our Jerusalem, I trust in the mercy of Almighty God, not to destroy, but to correct it. Ah, it is I who have sinned, and who have done iniquity; but as for these sheep, what have they done? But I ought not to aggravate your sorrow, nor indulge any longer in these lamentations. Let us change our tears into prayers, both for those who are departed, and for ourselves, who may so shortly follow them. Above all things, let us beware of the detestable opinion that the Most High doth not care for us, since, as the apostle says, 'whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.' Nothing, in human events, as you well know, occurs through chance; fortune confounds not the death and life of men, and though the abyss of the judgments of God be hidden to us, we cannot doubt but that it is in all things just. Not a sparrow falls to the ground without your heavenly Father, and do we suppose that any servant of God can finish his mortal life without that same heavenly Father? the hairs of our head are all numbered, and our steps are reckoned; and how much more is our death or life known to Him? I beseech Jesus Christ, the

Creator of all men, and your Redeemer, the Author of our transitory and eternal life, to receive to eternal life these members of his flock that have been taken from us, and those who may be about to be summoned. Raise up your hearts, dearest brethren, in devout prayers, stand between the living and the dead, and with a contrite and humble heart invoke the mercy of Almighty God. I would rather speak than write to you; but I am compelled to continue my journey to the Pope: I trust soon to return, and again by God's favour, to behold those whom my soul loveth *."

Thus then was the grace of friendship imparted to the peaceful inhabitants of cloisters. Thus did they love each other; but this was not all, for it is certain that they also loved the place itself which sheltered them; and the contentment of heart which such love indicates, is so remarkable that it will be well to produce passages in proof. Who now is content with the place of his own residence, and willing to remain in it for ever? "We that are born in the sorrows of this pilgrimage," to use the words of St. Gregory, alluding to men in a similar state of society, "have come to that state of weariness, that we know not what we ought to desire; for the more the mind alienates itself from the food of sweetness, so much the more is the disease increased, and therefore it has no appetite for internal delights, because it has long ceased to enjoy them, so that we are oppressed with weariness, and with the lingering pestilence of famine, and because we do not wish to taste within the prepared sweetness, wretched men, we love our hunger. This is the difference between the delights of the body and those of the heart, that when the former are not possessed, they are ardently desired, but when greedily enjoyed they turn to loathing, and are soon despised; whereas on the contrary, spiritual delights, when not possessed, are held in loathing, but when possessed are the object of desire; and so much the more are they thirsted after in proportion as they are more possessed. With the former, the appetite pleases, and the experience disgusts; with the latter, the appetite is vile, and the experience delights; with the one, appetite generates satiety, and satiety disgust; with the other, appetite

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* Epist. lib. iv. 39.

leads to fulness, and fulness produces appetite; for spiritual delights increase desire in the mind while they fill it, because the more their taste is perceived, the more they are known and desired *." Hence the experience of the middle ages leads the ascetic to conclude, that "the more studiously any one keeps within his cell, so much the more doth it please him; but that the seldomer he enters it, the more he dislikes it †." Of disliking it, however, as the monastic writings prove, it was seldom a question in the middle ages; or if an instance did occur, it was generally followed by a voluntary return of the fugitive to the monastery, imploring to be received on condition of performing some humiliating penance for the rest of his life; as in the case of the monk of St. John-des-Vignes at Soissons in the thirteenth century, whose nine last years were thus spent, proving how dearly he valued the peace which pride had tempted him to forsake ‡. Monastic severity on such occasions consisted in refusing to receive back the fugitive.

Who is this already risen, the hour before the heavenly harnessed team begins his golden progress in the east, standing so thoughtful at an open window, inhaling the freshness and the beauty, which seem to fill his eyes with tears of gratitude! It is the monk, who says with the Carthusian, "the cell is a place of refuge, a seat of quietness, a port of tranquillity; the cell is a place of useful discipline, conducing not a little even to human objects; for where the impediments of the world are excluded, where the darkness of sin is dissipated, where the passions are bridled, where hostile tumults are appeased, a great facility is afforded to learning. The cell is therefore an excellent place for composing books. In what place are celestial truths so profoundly discussed, so subtilly investigated as in the solitary silent chamber? The cell is besides a place for inflaming the affections, and for exciting holy desires; for there devout thoughts and divine meditations are more frequent §." "The meditations of a solitary student," says a great French

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* S. Greg. Hom. 36. in Evang.

† Thom. à Kemp. de Discip. Claust. 7.

‡ Hist. de Soissons, ii. 162.

§ Pet. Sutorus de Vita Carthusiana, lit. ii. t. ii. 1.

physician, "have a secret charm which makes him forget the vulgar joys of the exterior world. He loves to take refuge from it, and find himself face to face with nature *."

"Pax est in cella, foris autem plurima bella,"

was the line ever on the tongue of brother Pacifico of the Franciscan convent at Sienna, to whom I used to be led often by my father when a boy, says a holy priest of that city.

In the middle ages there were princes and noble philosophers in the world who loved to imagine themselves in the same asylum. Writing to Andrew Corneo of Urbino, John Picus of Mirandula says, "I prefer my little cell, my books, and my peace of mind, to royal courts, to their occupations and honours †." Ulysses, though in the island of Calypso, and in the beauteous grotto, grieves that he cannot see his father-land. What a lovely scene was spread before him! what harmony in the groves! what odours from the meadow! yet he sat alone, weeping, gazing on the sea, making the rocks re-echo with his groans ‡. To the monk, his monastery, though in a foreign land, was his country, so far as enabling him to enjoy the peace which reigned within it and the felicity of existence. Benedictine monks indeed used to derive their names from the spot in which their monastery stood, not from that in which they had been born §. With what affection do they speak of the abbey which has sheltered them!

"Toto corde meo te Centula mater amavi.
Traditus à puero, mea sub te colla ligavi.
Richarius foveat me, sub quo sanctificavi,
Ut Christo placeam, me cui sacrificavi."

Such are the lines with which the monk of St. Riquier concludes his chronicle of that house. The monk of Croyland is diffuse in praises of his own monastery.

"Dulce patri fratrem fore, quo cœtu vacat omnis
Fraterna invidia; decus hoc Croylandia sola

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* D'Alibert, Physiologie des Passions, 1. 38.

† Joan. Pic. Mir. Epist. lib. i. 36.

‡ v.

§ Sicilia Sacra, i. 172.

Se sua concordia semper voto celebrasse
Vindicet ut proprium, discedant jurgia, rixæ.
Hic nihil hospitii poscant, sunt omnia plena
Hospitibus gratis; libet id narrare quod ipsi
Vidimus, ut virtus crescat laudata; quid illa
Alliciens hominum mentes devotio sancta
Efficit in templo, quantum prostratio parva,
Mens humilis, rectus oculos, pes sobrius, et vox
Continuæ laudis, juvat his nimis associari
Collegiis, quorum pia vita repercutit ipsa
Culmina cœlorum; ne sancta precamina votis
Frustrentur precibus fratris, ego nunc mea vestris
Omnia commendo, valeant qui vestra valere
Exoptant, etiam vos in Christo valeatis."

"Me sola Hirsaugia gaudet," is the expression of Trithemius in writing its chronicle. "Though separated from your church now twenty-four years," says Ansellus writing to his friend at Paris, "yet in mind I am ever present there with you, and I call to memory continually the places in which I was nurtured, and those with whom I was educated; yea, in my dreams I often seem to assist at your solemnities and processions, and at your ferial matins and offices, and to sing with you *." The diaries and chronicles of the monks contain indirect, but no less convincing, proof of their attachment to the monasteries in which they lived. In 1337 Theodoric, Abbot of Corby in Saxony, wrote letters to require the superiors of every house to keep a chronicle of the events relating to it, on the ground that such documents would be of advantage to future ages †. Sometimes, indeed, the monks preferred giving a brief, simple record of chief public events, as that of the monastery of Cava ‡. Frequently they produced works of great historical importance, as the house chronicle of St. Gall, begun by Rapert, from the time of St. Gall, and continued by Eckehard IV., Burkard, Konrad von Pfeffers, and Küchimeister, till 1328, when the narrative closes. Collections of this kind are very curious, from their containing, besides original information, extracts from earlier records; thus in the annals of the Abbey of Clonmacnois, written in the eleventh century, are fragments of Irish writers and

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* Gallia Christiana, i. 427. † Martene, Vet. Script. ii. 621.
‡ Chronic. Cavense, Rer. It. Script. vii. ab an. 569 ad 1318.

poets of the sixth and seventh centuries, of whom no other vestige now remains. "As navigators love to relate the dangers of their voyages in youth, so monks, after escaping from worldly passions, were fond of casting over the sea of the world a melancholy look, which was not wholly without a charm *." "The matter of this work," says John, Abbot of Victoria or Vitring, in his chronicle of Carinthia, "is concerning the emperors, kings, and pontiffs, of Austria, Styria, and Carinthia, with diverse incidents intermixed, including an interval of one hundred and twenty years, exhibiting to the reader the shortness of human life, the fragility of nature, the instability of fortune, and the treacherous and transitory variety of mundane glory †." The monks of Einsiedelin, Albert de Bonstetter, and Hartmann, in their chronicles, have both, like some other monastic historians, contrived to group the principal events of Europe round the incidents immediately connected with their own abbey, so that the monastery forms a common centre to all important facts, the recital of which might otherwise have been complicated and obscure. But, in general, like the historians who preceded Herodotus, monks confine their observations to local limits, and content themselves with recording, in a concise and artless, but clear and not ungraceful style, the events in each district, or the legends relating to the houses which they especially loved. These diaries, which might be styled monastic evenings at home, which descend even to such details that one might regard them as a kind of farm-yard journal, that bring back many boyish recollections, indicate those habits of quiet and delicious observation with regard to the occurrences of each day in rural life, than which nothing can more unequivocally indicate peace of heart, contentment, and fondness for the very locality in which they were living. Thus one of the chronicles, published by Dom Pez, records when the cistern of the abbey was frozen ; another, how the Danube overflowed, inundating the cloisters and even the library ; another, that violets were gathered at Christmas and the Epiphany ‡. Let us read a page of the annals of Corby in Saxony.

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* Paulin Paris. Dissertations sur les Chroniques de S. Denis.

† Ap. Pez. Script. Rer. Aust. i.

‡ Id. i.

"This year, 897, our Godescalchus had an admirable dog, whose prudence (if it be lawful so to speak) all admired. He was taught by brother Baddo, an ingenious monk. In 1049, on the mountain of Belenberg, there was a wild boar taken, probably strayed from Sollingen, with an iron collar, on which was inscribed, 998, A.C.D.D. whence we concluded that it was put on by Adolphus, Count of Dassel, who was a great hunter. In 1155 all things were well composed in the monastery, God giving His blessing. In 1159, a rustic, who never took any other food but milk, died at the age of 131. In 1160 and 1161, we had tranquil times, full of concord and religion, God being propitious to us in all things within and without the abbey. In 1200 there was a parrot of rare capacity in our monastery. 1307 was a happy and fortunate year in all things, glory to God. In 1324, a stork, building its nest on our palace of the Cæsars, filled our granary with vipers and serpents; for as particles of these reptiles fell from the nest, they multiplied to the injury of men and cattle. The nest, therefore, was destroyed." Cæsar of Heisterbach, however, by the way, would not have advised that measure, for he says, "At Cîteaux, the headhouse of our order, there are many storks, which the brethren permit to build all round the abbey, because they freed the place from reptiles. The storks and the brethren lived in peace, and the storks, on going away for the winter, seemed, by their hovering round the monks who were working in the fields, to ask a blessing, which was given to them *." The diaries make frequent mention of the sagacity which birds and other animals seemed to attain under the protection of the monks. When, by order of Bishop Heidenreich, the monastery of Kulmsee, founded by Bishop Christian, and destroyed by the pagan Prussians on their invasion of Kulmerland, was to be re-built, one day, as the abbot, and some knights of the Teutonic order, were inspecting the work, they espied a tame raven, which belonged to Stettin, one of the monks, sitting sorrowful by itself, and the abbot said, "What are you thinking of, raven?" and the raven answered in Latin, "The eternal years and your death †." In 1507, in the con-

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* Illust. Mirac. lib. x. c. 58.

† Voight, Geschichte Preussens, ii. 477.

vent of Muri, there was a lamb like that which St. Francis had, which, at the sound of the bell, used to go to the choir, and stay there during the whole of the divine office. When the sign for matins used to be given, it used to run round and beat with its forehead against the door of each cell, and so perambulate the whole dormitory, beating till it had raised every one up, and on entering the choir, if it missed any one, it would return to the dormitory and bleat *." In 1336, say the annals of Corby, Daniel Bobenhus brought from Belenberg an otter, which our novices had for a long time in the refectory.

We before alluded to the meteorological observations of the monks. Here again they come before us as connected with important events to the communities which were so dear to them. Thus we read that it was in the beginning of a dreadful night of storm and rain that John, a monk of Ouches, a poet and a saint, who had lived forty-eight years in that house, expired †. Orderic Vitalis, enumerating the calamities of the year 1134, describes the heavy snow which began on the Holy Innocents, the inundations succeeding the consuming heat of the succeeding June, the numbers of bathers who perished in the lakes, the storm and whirlwind on the eve of St. Laurence, after nones, and the lightning which proved fatal to so many persons,—in September the destruction of Mans and Chartres, Alençon, Nogent-au-Perche, Verneuil, and other towns, by fire, the awful breaking in of the sea in Flanders, and, finally, the death of many illustrious princes and seigneurs. On the twenty-eighth of October, 1135, while the church, he says, "was celebrating the festival of St. Simon and St. Jude, and that monks were singing devoutly the office of matins, there arose, about the fourth watch of the night, a violent wind, which continued unabated till nones, resounding with a terrific uproar, uncovering the roofs of houses, and ravaging the woods, and prostrating a multitude of trees ‡." Guibert, Abbot of Nogent, does not disdain to notice such events. "The thunder," he says, "one morning fell over this monastery, entered the church, and destroyed part of the chasuble, which was deemed

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* Wadding, Annal. Minorum, xv.

† Orderic. Vit. lib. v.

‡ Lib. xiii.

one of the most precious in the treasury. That chasuble had been sought for by name by the king of the English, an illegitimate man, and enemy of the church, named Rufus, whom God afterwards slew by means of a hunter. This king being unwilling to draw from his own treasury, destined a monk to be executor of this intention, and sent him to the abbot, saying, that he should give fifteen marks of silver; but the abbot refusing, the booty was taken by violence from the monastery, and soon after was redeemed for fifteen marks by the same abbot. Thus, by a sacrilege and by sacrilegious persons, the chasuble was first procured and then compounded for, so that the whole was under malediction *." Let us hear the chronicle of Mount Cassino. "On the fifteenth of February, while the brethren were in the church singing the office of the first hour, suddenly the thunder fell, and the hebdomadal priest, Mauno, and a novice were struck dead, and the rest were thrown prostrate on the earth. The picture of the Abbot Richerius was split in two, and many parts of the church injured. Therefore the venerable father, in council with the brethren, decreed, that, to appease the wrath of God, every month, on the first Friday, the community should abstain on bread and water, and proceed barefoot to Mass, at which the prayer against thunder should be said, as also the appropriate Psalms. I myself, says Leo of Ostia, remember, while at school in the monastery, that one night, during the second nocturn, the thunder fell six times in the church, and struck the tower. The monastery being built at the very top of the mountain, was exposed to frequent calamities from lightning, as well as to the vehement blast of the winds from every side, so that when Abbot Desiderius rebuilt the church, it was necessary to lay a deep foundation, excavating the rocky crest of the mountain with fire and iron. So frequently did these dangers occur, that every Sunday in the year it was the custom at Mount Cassino to make a public supplication between tierce and high Mass. When I was a youth, says the Abbot Angelus de Nuce in his notes to the chronicle, I remember the thunder having often caused strange phenomena. Once it stripped one person of his hair; another it rendered for the moment

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* De Vita Sua, lib. i. c. 21.

insane; another it weakened in his limbs; and another escaped safe. Prodigia demum ex fulgoribus et fulminibus futurosque eventus venari non est christianæ religionis *." One observation recorded acquires a fresh interest from its similarity to what was seen at Migné in recent times. "In 1414, on the eighteenth of March, a minor friar preaching on the Eucharist in the square of the town of Guadalfagiara in Castille, during a public supplication, there appeared in the sky, over his head, a cross, white as the snow, which was seen both by Christians and Jews. Four or five days after, one hundred and twenty-two Jews embraced, in consequence, the Catholic faith. Through all Spain this was celebrated, and king John of Castille, and king Ferdinand of Aragon, sent figures of the cross in letters to St. Vincent Ferrer, asking his opinion, which is given by Diagus in his history of the Dominicans of the province of Aragon †."

The dangers to which monks were sometimes exposed in their isolated convents, and the strangeness often of the manner of their deliverance, form also a very interesting part of these peaceful memoirs. Thus, in the annals of the Capuchins, we read, that some Turkish pirates, in 1575, made a descent on the Italian coast in the province of St. Nicholas near the convent of Monopolitani, which stood near the shore. Thither they went, when, lo! the matin bell was sounded at the usual hour. The pirate supposing it an alarm, was for retreating hastily, but an apostate in his crew told him what it meant; so they proceeded, entered the church, and heard the brethren singing the divine praises. We must suffer them to praise God, said the pirate; let us go elsewhere first, and on our return we can take them prisoners when they will have finished worshipping God. So departing secretly, they went to a secular house in the neighbourhood, and took captive all its inhabitants. On their return to the Capuchin church, finding the friars still at their devotions, they said, these men who praise God, and crucify themselves thus for others' wickedness, must be spared. They passed on to their ships, and the friars escaped the danger ‡. On a September night, in the

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* Chronic. Casinensis, lib. iii. c. 22.

† Wad. Annal. Minorum, ix.

‡ Annal. Capucinorum, ad an. 1575.

year 1474, after the gates of the city had been closed, some Turkish pirates made an invasion on the Franciscan convent, without the walls of Mazara, in Sicily, intending to pillage it, and carry off the monks prisoners That night the sacristan, moved by an internal impulse, rose before the regular hour, and tolled the bell for matins, at which sound the pirates thought that snares were laid for them, and fled to their ships *. In like manner the chronicle of Mount Cassino records, that certain robbers set out by night to make a descent upon that monastery, but that, by an interposition of Providence, they were made to wander all night long round and round it without being able to find the place.

Such, then, in general, are the notices and observations of the monks, which, I conceive, without danger of contradiction, we may adduce as indicating their attachment to the houses of peace which they inhabited; in connection with the interest of which the least events acquired such an importance in their eyes, as to be judged worthy of transmission to posterity. But we are not left to come to a conclusion from such inferences; for the monks expressly record how dearly they loved their own abbeys, and how deeply they grieved when they were torn from them.

When John, Abbot of Croyland, in the reign of Richard II., was obliged to travel to Westminster to defend the cause of his abbey in Parliament, the monk who relates his history says, "that he was torn away from the quiet of contemplation to exercise his duty amidst the laborious affairs of the world †." Speaking of Richard, Abbot of the same house in the time of king Richard III., the historian says, "Nor ought we to consign to oblivion the manners and merits of this father, and the patience of his mind, by which, as we hope, he gained the reward of eternal happiness; for he was much more inclined of his own disposition to the study and writing of books than to engaging in the disputes and troubles of secular affairs." So that patience was tried in leaving the monastery, not in remaining in it. "If it please his majesty to let me retire to my convent," says the Franciscan Guevara, "I promise you, on the faith of a christian,

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* Sicilia Sacra, ii. 871.

† Hist. Croylandensis Rer. Aug. Script. i.

not to stop one hour longer at the court; for the court is no more fitting for me than I am for the court."

Bede was deemed most happy from never having left his abbey of Wearmouth; though without having seen Rome, it was he who first gave that name to the amphitheatre of Vespasian, by which it has ever since been designated. Many of his contemporary monks were as content as himself to remain in their monasteries. When Lullus, the Bishop, sent presents of clothes to the Abbot Gutberct, the disciple of Bede, that holy man replied, "Gratefully I have received your gifts, to honour the blessed memory of our master Bede. It seems, indeed, most just that the whole nation of the English, in all their provinces and every where, should return thanks to God for having raised up among them such a wonderful man, of whom I can bear testimony, having been nourished at his feet. This garment of various colours which you have sent me to preserve my body from cold, I have consecrated to the Almighty God, and have placed it with great joy as an ornament to cover the altar which is in his church, because I have lived in this monastery under his protection for the space of forty-three years." Mabillon cites a passage from the chronicle of a monastery, describing the peaceful life of a lay brother, who for fifty years had never left that house. "He never wished to go out to stay at any of the exterior cells: he used to lie in the church, taking care of the lights, cleaning the pavement, washing the walls, and labouring with all his power in the discharge of holy services: he used to sing the Psalter in order every day, and after matins he never indulged in the rest of a quiet bed." At length he made a blessed end, after a short illness *. "This year, 853," say the annals of Corby, "our Bunicus, called to be a bishop, preferred serving God in his cell, rather than rule over others, to the danger of his soul †." When Pope Nicholas wished to make Matthew Rheginus, a minor friar, Archbishop of Rosana in Calabria, he sent to him Cardinal Firmano, who came into his cell and disclosed the object of his mission. The friar, without answering him, ran out of his cell, and called the brethren to come to his assistance. He wept

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* In VI. Sæcul. § 12.

† Ap. Leibnitz, Script. Bruns. iii.

and cried out, "Come hither, help your miserable brother. Alas! wretched me; I have spent a long life in religion, I have lived poor and obedient, I have never violated the rule of blessed Father Francis, I have preached the word of God to the people; in my little cell I have enjoyed a rich poverty, contemplating divine secrets, and now I am called to episcopacy, to business, to honour, which I never desired. O immaculate religion, O sacred influence of the cloister, O sweet silence of the cell, O beloved brethren, O companions of my consolations, am I to leave you, and to be deprived of your most sweet conversation? No. But I must have your assistance; defend, deliver me, lest Firmano should carry me off *."

In the abbey of Abdinghoff at Paderborn lived the recluse St. Paterne, who having predicted that the city would be consumed by fire, and seeing his prophecy accomplished, preferred perishing in the flames to leaving the cell which he had chosen, as Sigebert and Marianus Scotus relate. Nor can I omit mention of a poor Clare, once a marchioness at the court of France, whom I met hastening back to her convent, from which she had been sent to beg alms, and who told me with a smile, that her motive in adopting such a rapid mode of conveyance was anxiety to die in her own cell; for having passed her eightieth year, she regarded a slight indisposition as announcing that she was near her end. The same desire was expressed by St. Bernard; for towards the close of his life, in a letter to Peter the Venerable, he writes thus, "I have determined to leave the monastery no more, excepting once a year, for the assembly of the Cistercian abbots. Here, supported by your prayers and consoled by your benedictions, during the few days which I have further to militate, I shall wait until my change cometh. My strength is broken, and I have a legitimate excuse to move about no longer as I used. I shall sit and keep silence, if by chance I shall experience what of the fulness of internal sweetness the holy prophet uttered, saying, 'Bonum est exspectare Dominum in silentio.' In silence and in hope will be my strength †." It was in reply to this letter that Peter the Venerable says, "What I never remember to have done, unless through reverence

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* Italia Sacra, ix. 366.

† Epist. ccxxviii.

for the sacred books, when I had read the writing I kissed it." What shall I add to these instances? There was found stability in monks, even when their places seemed to know them no more: the walls might perish; their hearts were immoveable. When the monks of Ouche were proposing to remove, after the destruction and pillage of their abbey, Orderic Vitalis relates that the Prior Ascelin resolved to remain and end his days there in the fear of the Lord. "As for you," he said to the brethren, "I dare not persuade you to abandon your resolution to fly from this desolated spot. Depart with the benediction of God, travel to foreign countries with the bones of our good Father; but as for me, I will not abandon the territory of Ouche. I will serve my Creator in the place where He has loaded me with so many good things. I know that the bodies of many saints repose here. An angelic vision pointed out this spot to our holy Father, that he might combat here for the edification of much people. A vast number of the faithful have offered up on this spot to the Almighty King, the agreeable sacrifice of a holy life, the recompense of which they have now received, crowned in the Elysian asylums. I will remain here, persevering in the track of those who have preceded us; I will preserve this savage spot in the name of the Lord, until a more prosperous time shall smile upon us, through the grace of the Lord of lords." Ascelin remained here to his old age and death, when he confided the place to his nephew, who was a clerk; but the young man grew weary of the solitude, and passed into France. Thus, all men having withdrawn, Ouche became again a desert.

An historian of Ireland says that the annals of the tenth, eleventh, and twelfth centuries mention numbers of devout and learned monks living among the ruins of their monasteries, which had been ravaged by the Danes, as if unable to leave places so dear to them.

When Dom Martene visited the abbey of Bourras in the diocese of Auxerre, he found it in ruins; but one monk still lived amongst them, a model of holiness and poverty*. In 1640, John Hartry, a Cistercian monk, on returning from Spain, fixed his residence among the ruins of the dissolved abbey of the Holy Cross in Tipperary, where he compiled a work upon that ancient monastery, and a history of the Cistercian order in Ireland. When the last revolution overthrew monasteries in Europe, similar instances of attachment and stability was often witnessed. A traveller through Germany may still arrive at vast desecrated monasteries, in which some poor old constant monk is lingering solitary in an obscure distant chamber of the immense building, at whose death the state, like a greedy vulture, is to rush upon the remainder of the spoil. The Count of Stolberg mentions, on occasion of his visit in 1791, to the beautiful Carthusian monastery on the banks of the Rhine near Mayence, which had been lately suppressed, that when the monks received the command to leave the cloister, command emanating from the Primate of Germany, at which Stolberg, though then still a Protestant, seems to cover his face with both hands, one aged Father died of horror on hearing of the resolution *.

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* Voyage Lit. 51.

This attachment of monks to their own monastery and order was very different from the narrow and contracted affection of men in the world, who are so self-endeared that nothing pleases but what is in some degree or other personal. There were different orders to suit the divisions of graces, of ministrations, and of works which were inspired by the same spirit under the same Lord. Of diverse voices is sweet music made; and so in the Church different orders rendered sweet harmony; "for all were so arranged that none could see and not admire them." "The Church, like a garden of pleasure, was adorned with many-coloured flowers, represented by the variety of her sacred orders and rites †," which were in perfect agreement with unity of faith and manners. Each order, each monastery could supply something of interest to the curious student of ecclesiastical antiquity. "The difference of monastic orders," says a Carthusian, "arises from the difference of dispositions in men; for what pleases one would not be grateful to another; what would benefit one would injure another. Some like solitude, others society; one loves contemplation, another action; and it was for this reason that the holy Fathers instituted so many different modes of life, as conducive to salva-

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* Reise in Deutschland, 35.

† Card. Bona de Divina Psal. 439.

tion*." Therefore Pope Clement IV. replied to a knight who asked which order he ought to embrace, "They all tend to the same end, which is the salvation of souls. Whether you embrace this rule or that, you will take the narrow way and enter by the little gate into the land of milk and honey. Examine, then, carefully which order is most suitable to your genius, and adhere to it, so as not to withdraw your love from others;" for "some," says St. Bonaventura, "tend to God by quiet, others by labour; some in this manner, others in that; and often what is esteemed the least is the best. Therefore," he adds, "do not judge any one to be more imperfect than yourself, because he does not perform all the things which you do†."

"Monks on a journey," as St. Bonaventura says, "were carefully to avoid exalting the merit and excellence of their own order, dwelling on the detail of its advantages, so as to praise it to the disparagement of other institutes: they were to esteem it without making any invidious comparisons; for it is wickedness to praise one's self while depreciating others‡." "Never boast of the dignity of your order," says another cloistral guide, "or the beauty of the locality, lest you should be deceiving yourselves§." "Heaven forbid that any one should believe God to be local," says a monk of Cluny, writing for the instruction of an abbot of a monastery at Spires, "so as to suppose that He cannot perform in the territory of Spires what He does in France. Only let his mercy be with you, that He who proves the reins and the heart may see that there his precepts are observed with the same simplicity and with no less regard to his will‖." As St. Bernard says, "Each one was to hold fast the good which he held without judging another holding other things; that whoso had received to be good might not envy those who were better; that he who seemed to himself to do better might not despise what was good in another; and that they who could live more strictly might not despise those who could not¶."

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* Pet. Sutorus, De Vit. Carthus. lib. i. c. xi.

† Stim. Amoris, P. iii. c. 9.

‡ Specul. Novitiorum, c. 32.

§ Thom. à Kemp. Dialog. Novitiorum, 3.

‖ Antiq. Consuet. Cluniac. Epist. Nuncup.

¶ De Præcepto et Dispensatione.

With what veneration does St. Bernard write to Guigo, Prior, and to his brethren, the Carthusians, declaring that he hardly presumes to interrupt their quiet by his writings, lest he should trouble Moses on the mount, or Elias in the desert, or Samuel in the temple *. The letters of the Cluniac monks to the Carthusians, requesting to be associated in the society of their prayers, show what a fraternal bond could unite different orders †.

Writing to Pope Eugene, Peter the Venerable, Abbot of Cluny, says, "Many know how much I have always loved and venerated the institutions of the Carthusian order. I know it well; for if my mind do not deceive me, I acknowledge that for the last thirty years I loved that order above all others, and I thought that their life was preferable to that of all the other institutions of the Latins ‡." "Do you think we are angry," says St. Bernard, writing to the Abbot and brethren of Flay, in the diocese of Beauvais, "if any one who leaves our monastery, is received into yours? I wish that you could save without us, all that are committed to us. If any one of ours should fly away to your house for the sake of greater perfection, and through a desire of stricter life, so far from being angry at your assisting him, we entreat you to do this; nor shall we regard ourselves offended; but on the contrary, as much beholden to you for such assistance §."

It was the custom of the two monasteries of Mount Cassino and of St. Vincent, for the brethren to visit each other during Lent, in order to draw closer the bonds of love ||. "This year, 906," say the Annals of Corby in Saxony, "our Chrysostom went to golden Corby, in France, and was most humanely received there by the whole congregation." Monks of one order did not seek to win over those of another to their own. "Some one wishes from the Cluniac Institute to pass to the Cistercian poverty. If he consults me," continues St. Bernard, "I do not advise him to do so. Why so? First, because of the scandal of those whom he leaves: secondly, because it is not safe to leave certain things for doubtful: thirdly,

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* Epist. xi.

† Mabill. Vet. Analecta, 159.

‡ Epist. lib. vi. 12.

§ Epist. lxviii.

|| Chronic. S. Monast. Casinens. 35.

because I suspect levity in such wishes *. Again, elsewhere, he writes thus: "Who hath ever heard me disputing, or secretly whispering, against the order of Cluny? When have I ever seen one of that order, but with joy, received him, but with honour, spoken to him, but with reverence, exhorted him, but with humility? I have said, and I repeat it, that mode of life is holy, instituted by the Fathers, preordained by the Holy Ghost, and not moderately adapted to the saving of souls. I remember having been sometimes received to hospitality in monasteries of that order. May our Lord recompence to his servant the humanity which they evinced beyond what was necessary to me in sickness, and the honour beyond my deserts, which they thus lavished upon me. I have commended myself to their prayers; I was present at the collations; often had I discourse with them publicly in their chapters, and privately in their chambers. Whom have I ever attempted to alienate from that order, or to invite over to ourselves? Have I not rather repressed many who wished to come to us? Why should we disagree? Are the continent and the married to condemn each other, because they converse in the church according to their respective laws? Are monks to blame clerks, or are monks of different orders to speak derogatively of each other? How shall there then be peace in the Church, in which there must be variety, for it is impossible that one man should hold all orders, or one order all men: I am not so stupid, as not to recognize the tunic of Joseph, not of him who delivered Egypt, but of him who saved the world. The Church is clothed with variety, but all is peace. Each receiving his peculiar gift, ministers accordingly; one in this manner, another in that; whether Cluniacs, or Cistercians, or regular clerks, or faithful laics; each order, each tongue, each sex, each age, each condition, in all places, and in all times, has its peculiar office, and exercises it in peace †. What then? I am a Cistercian; do I therefore condemn the Cluniacs? God forbid; but love them, but I magnify them. Why then, you will say, did I not embrace their order? because, each one has his particular calling, and all things are not expedient; and different medicines are required for different diseases.

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* De Præcepto et Dispensatione, xvi.

† Apologia ad Guillelmum, c. iii.

I praise and love all orders, wherever there is a pious and just life in the Church. Unum opere teneo, cæteros caritate [*]. In fine," he says, "let it be remembered, that whatever may be our observance, those who live orderly, and yet speak proudly, make themselves citizens of Babylon, and sons of darkness and of hell, where is no order, but eternal horror dwelleth [†]."

About the year 1140, a certain canon regular writes in these terms to a prior. "Facta est contentio inter discipulos quis eorum videretur esse major. This root of dissension was taken away by Christ, saying, 'qui voluerit major esse inter vos erit vester servus.' Who after this will dare to say, ego melior sum? If any one ask me who is best? If I am a canon, I answer the monks are best: if I am a monk, my reply is, the canons are best. This is the rule of a Christian [‡]."

With what love and reverence does Martin of Fulda, the Benedictine, speak of St. Francis, and of the rise of the mendicant orders [§]! "It cannot be believed," says the Chronicler of Monte Sereno, "that any one of these two new orders of the preachers and minors can be holier than Augustin or Benedict. But, far be it from me to say this in their disparagement. I only lament that men who wish to renounce the world think the primitive orders no longer sufficient [||]."

"There are more canonized saints in the order of St. Benedict," observes an Austrian abbot, "than in any other: yet this I say," he adds, "not to derogate from other orders; for every order is good, provided it deserves to be called an order; but where is no order, there is confusion [¶]." "It is not glorious to the blessed that men should dispute concerning holy men, or claim them with intemperance for any particular order," says Mabillon. "Such contests were unknown to the ancient monks. We wish to make a work that will benefit all who profess the monastic life. Nor does it matter whether you be instructed by the example of a Basilian or of a Benedictine. All Christians live in common. The saints lived in common: their example is proposed in common, that all may derive advantage. Charity claims nothing private for itself. We shall, however, endeavour carefully to distinguish our saints from the monks of another institute,—'non ad faciendam pompam, sed ad illustrandam historiæ veritatem.'" The Benedictines had no jealousy against the modern orders. Balthasar à Dermbach, Abbot of Fulda, desired that his body might be buried in the church of the Jesuits, where he had erected a tomb for himself; and John Frederic, who succeeded him, adorned and restored the Jesuits' church *.

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[*] c. iv. [†] c. v.

[‡] Ap. Martene, Vet. Script. i. 767.

[§] Chronic. ap. Eccardii Corp. Hist. Med. Ævi, i.

[||] Chron. Montis Sereni, ap. Menckenii Script. Rer. Ger. ii.

[¶] Dialog. Hist. Martini Abb. c. 7. ap. Pez. Script. Rer. Aust. ii.

Observe how Trithemius the Benedictine praises the men of the Franciscan, Dominican, Augustinian, and Carmelite orders †, on the origin and excellence of the last of which, he wrote a book expressly ‡, and how the Carthusians praise every other order as well as their own §! The Cistercians alone were thought by some to regard the Franciscans with less favourable eyes ||; but no facts are produced to justify the opinion. Nor were the new orders remiss in returning such love. At the death of a Benedictine abbot, Dominicans, Franciscans, and Capuchins, used to be seen entering his church, to kiss the body, as when Dom Didier de la Cour died at St. Venne ¶. With what reverence and affection does Touron the Dominican speak of the Benedictines, and of Mount Cassino, in his life of St. Thomas of Aquin! Arnold Bostius, a Carmelite, wrote a book in praise of the great men of the Carthusian order **. Ribadeneira says that St. Dominick bore a wonderful great respect to all other religious orders, and to every particular person of them; and of the Seraph of Asisi he might tell the same: for love and wisdom made them similar. "Once baptized," says the Franciscan Antonio Guevara, "there is no order in the whole Church of God in which a good man cannot be saved, and in which a bad man will not be condemned: so that, whether we take the habit of

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* Schannat. Hist. Fuldens. p. iii.

† In Chronic. Hirsaug.

‡ Trithem. Nepiachus.

§ Anonym. Carthus. de Religion. Origine, ap. Martene, Vet. Script. vi.

|| Annal. Minor. iv.

¶ Voyage Lit. de Deux Bénédict, 108.

** De Viris Illust. S. Cartus. Ord.

St. Benedict or of the Augustinians, of St. Dominic or of St. Francis, of the Carthusians or of Trinitarians, or of any other, it matters little, since they are all holy habits, instituted by holy men*."

Pope Clement IV., in 1266, in the letter already quoted to a certain noble knight, who desired to know to which of the two orders he should yield himself in preference, replied, "Adhere to the one, and still love the other: for a friar of the order of Preachers, who does not love the Minors, is execrable; and a Minor friar, who either hates or despises the order of Preachers, is execrable and damnable†." So the great historian of the Minors, in his epistle to the reader, desires to extol the merits of both equally. "The society of the Minors," he says, "has many and specious things; but neither are great ornaments wanting to other orders of the Church.—'Pulchra sunt omnia tabernacula Jacob, et tentoria sacra Israel, ut valles nemorosæ, ut horti juxta fluvios irrigui, ut tabernacula quæ fixit Dominus, quasi cedros prope aquas.' The illustrious Baronius," he continues, "magnifies the Dominicans, but seems disposed to depreciate the Franciscans. Let the sacred family of the Preachers live, flourish, and be exalted; whose learning, discipline, and dignity, are beyond all praise. But, in order to commend it worthily, is it necessary to vituperate the Minors‡?" True to these instructions, the great poet of the ages of faith, in his paradise, represents St. Bonaventura the Franciscan proclaiming the praises of St. Dominick, and St. Thomas Aquinas the Dominican celebrating those of St. Francis; each blaming the irregularities, not of the other's order, but of that to which he himself belonged§.

It would not be difficult to produce admirable instances of this fraternal affection, which long continued between these two great families. When some grandees of Andalusia, and even officers of the King Philip II., took occasion to injure the Franciscans, it was a Dominican of Granada, Ferdinand du Château, superior of the convent of Our Lady at Atocha, and of great authority at court, who, without being solicited, undertook their defence, and exerted himself to such effect that the prosecution

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[*] Epist. lib. ii.

[†] Annal. Minor. tom. iv.

[‡] Wadding, Annales Minorum, Epist. ad Vet.

[§] C. xii.

was stopped *. What bonds of affection existed between St. Vincent Ferrier, the Dominican, and St. Bernardine of Sienna, the Franciscan †! With what admirable charity and kindness did the Camaldulese Fathers treat the Capuchins, when they stood so much in need of support ‡! And again, what generosity did Dominick Ferdinand Navarette, the Dominican, Archbishop of St. Domingo, evince towards the Jesuits §! "Religiosas omnes familias veneror, et in Domino Jesu complector," says the Jesuit Drexelius ||.

Where traces of a contrary spirit appeared in the middle ages, the language of holy monks in reprobation is so instructive, that the occasions seem to have served more to the utility than to the injury of the Church. Let us hear Peter the Venerable, Abbot of Cluny, addressing St. Bernard, Abbot of Cîteaux. "If he who loveth not remaineth in death, in what death remaineth he who hateth, who detracteth? Why do I say this? Because I perceive that there are some of our and of your sheep who carry on a mutual war, and are fallen from charity, though men of the family of the same Lord, soldiers of the same King, and all equally Christians and monks. Ah, be it far from the hearts of monks to give place to the prince of this world, the king of the children of pride! But why do they oppose each other, and detract, and why devour they one another? Let the matter of the contention be produced at once; and, if there be a just quarrel, let it be terminated by just arbitration. What does a brother demand of a brother,—a monk of Cluny of a monk of Cîteaux,—or conversely? If the question be of cities, camps, towns, farms, or any landed possessions, little or great,—if it be of gold or silver, or of any quantity of money, propose it openly. There are here judges, not of iniquity, but of equity, and all prepared to remove the cause of contention. But it cannot be so with those who are enriched with the poverty of Christ. What then can be the subject of dispute?—for I will never desist until I discover it. It is perhaps concerning some different custom or exercise of monastic order? But, my beloved, if this be the cause

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* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. de S. Dom. iv. 32.

† Id. iii. 17.

‡ Annal. Capucinorum, ad an. 1542.

§ Touron, v. 38.

|| De Jejunio, liv. i. c. 3.

of so great an evil, saving the respect I owe to you, it is very irrational, very puerile and foolish: for if a variety of customs ought to separate the servants of Christ from charity, what peace, or concord, or unity, or remnant of the law of Christ, will be left,—not to monks alone, but to any Christians,—to all of whom the Apostle said, 'Alter alterius onera portate, et sic adimplebitis legem Christi?' Dearly beloved, is not the whole world covered with the churches of Christ; and does not the number of churches under one faith, and serving God in the same love, exceed all computation? And yet the variety of usages is as great as the multiplicity of places; while all retain charity. The enemy of men, finding that he can no longer injure by the instrument of heresy, adopts a different method. Seeing that he can at present no longer pervert faith,—which, by the Spirit of God, now fills the whole world,—he directs all his efforts to destroy charity: for since he cannot persuade Christian men to become infidels, he endeavours to prevent them from loving one another. Now the Arian, Sabellian, Novatian, Donatian, Pelagian, and Manichæan sects have perished and been dissipated by the Spirit of God, and have left to us a pure day free from all darkness; and therefore he only hopes to succeed in attacking us on the side of charity. And thus he causes us to contend about colours, and instigates the black monk to disdain the white, and conversely; though for each dress there is sufficient reason; and though such things are of no importance, according to our Rule, which prescribes that the monks should not dispute about the colour or coarseness of their habits, but wear vestments of whatever colour or quality is usual in their province, or what is most easily found, or the cheapest. You perceive how foolish then it is to dispute about colour. It is damnable to hate a brother for the colour of his habit. At length to you, my beloved, to whom this letter is sent, I return to address myself. The cause of my writing was charity. It remains that you, whom highest Providence hath raised up as a strong pillar to support the edifice of the monastic order, —that you, whom he hath given, as it were, a shining star, not only to monks, but to the whole Latin Church of our time, should exert your utmost diligence to prevent any dissension between the great congregations of our name and order. I have always studied to commend the holy monks of your congregation to our own, and to incorporate, as it were, our own with them, in the union of a perfect charity. This I have not neglected in public, in private, and in our great assemblies. Do you also labour in this common field ; and, with that sublime and flaming eloquence imparted to your lips by the Spirit of God, expel from their hearts that puerile emulation, from their tongue that whispering ; and make them to substitute for these the desires of fraternal love : so that to whom there is one Lord, one faith, one baptism,—to those who are contained in one Church, to whom remains one eternal and blessed life,—there may be also, according to the Scripture, one heart, and one soul*." Again, he writes to him on the same subject : " I have known some," he says, " whom not alone the common bond of faith unites, but also the same monastic rule, yet who are separated from that sincere unity of hearts in which they seem congregated by a certain unintelligible, occult, and execrable alienation of mind, a pride which even in common lay Christians has been overthrown. What can be the cause ? It cannot be an interest of money or property ; nor should it be diversity of customs,—for between all Christians is there not also diversity of customs ? And if a lay-man with those who hated peace was pacific, what will be a monk to a monk ? 'Si oculus tuus fuerit simplex, totum corpus tuum lucidum erit.' Behold, O brother, thy whole body with a simple eye,—that is, all things with a pure intention,—that is, with charity. You have a simple eye, who require a year of noviceship before admitting to the cloister ; you have a simple eye, who receive those who come before the lapse of a year. You have a simple eye, who are content with the raiment which the rule advises ; you have a simple eye, who permit it to be augmented in consideration of weakness or climate. You have a simple eye, who only thrice will receive back fugitives returning to you ; you have a simple eye, who will receive them back as often as they leave the monastery and return to it. You have a simple eye, who observe the fasts appointed without exception ; you have a simple eye, who permit some of these to be omitted. You have a simple eye, who observe manual labour according to the rule ; you have a simple eye, who, from not living in the country, substitute other employment for it. You have a simple eye, who, in every guest arriving or departing, adore Christ prostrate on the earth, and wash the feet of all; you have a simple eye, who do not prostrate yourself before all guests, or wash the feet of all, when the number would be too great. You have a simple eye, who wish the abbot's table to be always that for the guests and strangers; you have a simple eye, who prefer the abbot's table to be that for the monks, and not that at which all guests are received. You have a simple eye, who labour to restore the injuries and ruins of the monastic order in all places, and restore things to the pristine fervour; you have a simple eye, who so moderate the rule that the weak may not be discouraged, and ordain all things thus that souls may be saved. Thus Benedict wrote the rule; and Maur changed many things in it, both with a simple eye and the same intention: for in this manner there is no difference, no dissonance; but by charity all things become one; for the rule of the holy Father Benedict depends upon that sublime and universal rule of charity, from which are all the Law and the Prophets. May there be peace then, O Jerusalem, in thy strength, that there may follow abundance in thy towers * !"

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* S. Pet. Ven. Abb. Clun. Epist. lib. iv. 17.

These eloquent complaints lay bare a nerve which is tremblingly susceptible at the present day; but, during the middle ages, no passages conduced more to edification, because no one saw in them any thing but an allusion to an evil that was of a local and temporary nature.

Peter of Blois, writing to the Abbot of Evesham, takes for granted that there can be no such tendency to discord existing in his time: for he says to him, "It is the part of envy to consider as an injury the praise of another; but your approved religion will not regard it as an offence against you, that I have seemed to commend the Cistercian or Carthusian orders above others. In commending them I have not detracted from you. I approve of them, and I praise you. I have not erected their titles in prejudice of your fame. Christ is not divided, whether we wear a white or a black habit; but, in every order, whoever does the will of God is accepted of him. Variety is not absurd with the Spouse of Christ, when she is

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* S. Bern. Ep. ccxxix.

described as clothed with varieties—'Ipsa varietas uniformitatis causa est:' for in a harp, from a diversity of chords, there is made a uniform modulation to harmony. Moreover, according to the Apostle, there are divisions of graces, and ministrations, and works, while there is but one God who works all things in all. You may see the beauty of the Spouse in the variety of acts, professions, manners, opinions, and orders. Therefore she is described in the sacred pages as resembling a cedar, as a cypress, as a palm, as a plantation of roses, as an olive, as a platanus, as cinnamon and balsam, as myrrh, as incense and ammoniac, as turpentine, and as frankincense. This variety is indicated by Isaia, saying, 'Behold, I will place thy stones in order: I will found thee on sapphires, and jasper, and graven stones.' But all are one body: for all works, studies, and counsels, are referred to one; for the end of the law is Christ unto justice, to every one who believeth. Holy is the order of Cluniacs, holy the Cistercian; and in both hath the Lord placed the ministry of reconciliation, and the way of safety *."

It would be unjust to leave this ground without remarking that this exquisite charity, this comprehensive benevolence, so characteristic of the ages of faith, was manifested, not alone by monks of different communities towards each other, but also in general by the secular clergy towards the monks, and towards each of the religious orders collectively. The monks indeed invariably, from the beginning, showed them an example in this respect. "Do I dare to say any thing against clerks who live in cities?" asks St. Jerome. "Far be it from me to utter any sinister word respecting those who, succeeding to the apostolic degree, make with sacred lips the body of Christ, by whom also we are made Christians,—who, having the keys of the kingdom of heaven, in a certain manner judge before the day of judgment †."

"There are men," says John of Salisbury, "who observe long and strict fasts, who come to the nocturnal vigils, who lead a pure life, who keep the guard of silence on their lips, and make daily satisfaction for their daily faults, and who bear patiently all insults and injuries;—who must not admire such men, as of singular merit, as

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* Pet. Bles. Epist. xcvii.

† Epist. v.

truly apostolic, and imitators of Christ? They wear not a monastic habit, but I dare not call them seculars, since there is nothing secular to be found in them *."

Such was the monastic language towards the secular clergy,—always pacific, always affectionate and reverential: but, unhappily, the conduct of the latter was not in all countries so uniformly characterised by the same spirit.

It must be acknowledged, as St. Bonaventura remarks, that the cause of difference in this respect is to be traced to very profound roots, which cannot perhaps at any time be wholly removed. "We must not be surprised," he says, "when we see persons well engaged in active life murmuring against their brother who is devoted to the contemplative; for we read in the Gospel that so did Martha against Mary: but that Mary murmured against Martha, because she would not imitate her actions, we find no where †."

In Vigilantius there was found in an early age an organ to express a jealous feeling towards the monks; but, had he not also entertained heretical opinions, we may be sure that St. Jerome would not have replied to him so harshly as he did. "You say," answered the holy doctor, "that if all men were to shut themselves up in monasteries, who could celebrate in the churches? who could gain secular men? If all were foolish with you, who could be wise? But you say, Why do you go to the desert? Truly that I may not hear you nor see you ‡." When the fame of St. Benedict and of his brethren had spread through the country round the monastery of Mount Cassino, Florentius, the priest of a neighbouring church, began to grow jealous and indignant §. Thus there was an envious eye upon the monks, even when there was no clashing of temporal interests or rivalry of profession, and while they were saying, with St. Bernard, "It is of clerks to serve the altar, and to live of the altar; to us, our profession and the example of the ancient monks prescribe that we live by the labour of our hands, and not of the sanctuary of God ||."

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* De Nugis Cur. vii. 23.

† S. Bonavent. Meditat. Vit. Christi, cap. lv.

‡ Epist. xxxviii.

§ Chronic. Casinensis, 8.

|| S. Bern. Epist. 397.

When it became a question of monks being called to assist the secular clergy in their care of souls, this opposition became bolder. "Some come anxiously and ask us," says Ives de Chartres, "whether monks can be appointed to parishes and have the care of souls? to whom I answer, that, in the primitive Church, no rector of souls was constituted who was not taken from a life in community, because no one could more rightly be placed as a guardian over another's life than he who had first been made a guardian of his own: which in no place could be better proved than among those in whom a life according to rule seemed to flourish, and who disliked the malice of others in proportion as they had first disliked their own. Therefore, we conclude that such persons are not to be listened to, who say that regulars should not have cure of souls on the ground of their having renounced the world; since, precisely on that very account, they are so much the more to be chosen, because they have despised its pomp and pleasures,—'Non enim mundi contactus est animas a vitiis avocare, et ad virtutum celsitudinem provocare *.'" Let us hear the advice which St. Francis, whose eyes were ever fixed on the supreme peace, gave to his friars on this subject. "We are sent, dearest brethren," he says to them, "to assist the clergy for the salvation of souls; that what is found less in them may be supplied by us. Every one will receive his reward, not according to authority, but according to his labour. What, above all, pleases God, is the gain of souls; and this we shall better accomplish by keeping peace with the clergy, than by being at discord. But if they impede our object, vengeance is God's, and He will repay in proper time. Therefore be subject to prelates; and, as far as is in you, let no evil zeal arise. If you be the children of peace, you will gain both clergy and people; and this will be more acceptable to God than if you gained the people alone, and scandalised the clergy. Conceal their faults, supply their multiplied defects; and so doing, you will be more humble †."

The opposition, however, was not disarmed by such gentleness. A parish-priest came to the synod of Cologne in 1239, saying, "Behold, friars of the order of

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* Ivon. Carnot. Ep. ccxiii.

† Wadding, an. 1219.

Preachers have come here to our injury, and put their scythe in another man's harvest, hearing the confessions of our parishioners." Conrad, the legate, after hearing his complaint, demanded "what is the number of your parishioners?" and he replied 9000. Then the legate, signing himself with the cross, said, "Who art thou, miserable man, that alone canst suffice to the care of so many souls? Knowest thou not that thou wilt have to answer for all these, in the tremendous judgment, before the tribunal of Christ? and dost thou complain of those who desire gratuitously to relieve you of part of the burden? This complaint proves that you are unworthy of the care of souls; and, therefore, I deprive you henceforth of all pastoral benefice *."

Men of this description were not to be daunted by an appeal to future judgment. Reckless were they of consequences so distant, if they could but guard their monopoly, and pass their own inventions off to prove it just. Unhappily, the disinterestedness of the monks, and their desire to keep aloof from all political or worldly disputes, free from partial aim, formed another source of complaint which in the universities became loud and menacing. The disagreement between the secular and monastic doctors at Paris, began in the time of St. Thomas, whose moderation and gentleness were invincible, while the violence of his opponent Guillaume de Saint-Amour, was blamed even by his own party; for in that age there could be no gross violation of the law of charity by those whose office was to teach it, without a sense of shame. The secular doctors having suspended all lectures till they had justice for the scholars slain by the watch in the Lent of 1253, were indignant at the monastic doctors for continuing to teach within their convents; as they did also in 1229, during the minority of St. Louis and the regency of his mother, when the secular doctors had suspended all exercises of the school. The university having obtained justice, imposed an oath in future on all members to suspend teaching in similar cases. The Dominican and Franciscan doctors, not choosing that their exercises should be at the mercy of every commotion, declined taking it, and in consequence were by another decree excluded from the body of the university, and

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* Ad an. 1239.

deprived of their chairs. Pope Innocent IV., to whom the regulars appealed, ordered them to be restored. The secular doctors did not evince religious simplicity: they demanded protection from the bishops of France. Alexander IV. by his bull, "quasi lignum vitæ," confirmed however the former sentence, and exhorted the seculars to peace and charity; but Guillaume de St. Amour, continued to oppose the reestablishment of the regulars, aided by Odon of Douay, Nicolas de Bar-sur-Aube and Chrétien, canon of Beauvais, who were in consequence of their proceedings excommunicated by the Pope. The conduct of St. Thomas during these trials, was worthy of one who represented the religious orders. While he was preaching in the church of St. James on Palm Sunday, Guillot, a scholar of Picardy, interrupted him with insolence, commanding him to be silent till he read a notice from his masters. The saint remained silent while he read a long libel which had been written against the monks by Guillaume de St. Amour. When he had finished, St. Thomas resumed his discourse, and without saying a word to justify himself or his brethren, continued to preach. Soon afterwards, Guillaume published his libel "on the perils of the last times," in which he compared the monks to false prophets. St. Louis, justly indignant, sent the book to Rome. St. Thomas was ordered to answer it, though the author pretended to write in behalf and by order of the bishops, Fleury himself remarks that he was not sincere in protesting that he meant nothing against any order approved by the church, and it is certain also that at the very time many bishops were receiving the friars with open arms. Of the reply of St. Thomas, entitled, "Contra impugnantes Religionem *," which forms a most complete defence of the religious orders. Henry of Ghent, his contemporary, says, "Frater Thomas de Aquino opusculo subtilissimo errorem Guillielmi refutavit." The book was then condemned and burnt in the pope's presence. The author retired to his village of Saint Amour, in Burgundy, where he lived to an advanced age. At his death, he is said to have confessed that he had been actuated by envy at the learning of the Mendicant orders; and to prove that he repented from his heart, he left his body to be

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* Opuscula, xix.

buried with the friar preachers. Similarly, Laurentius Anglicus, after persecuting the friars, when he came to die at Paris, left them all his books, and, wonderfully penitent, desired to be buried in their convent *.

But to return to a more pleasing theme, the pacific and charitable spirit evinced towards the regular by the secular clergy. Mabillon, observing that Britain and Germany owed the light of faith to monks, adds, that he says this without any intention to disparage the secular clergy, however little they may be disposed to acknowledge the debt. "Sed quid juvat," he continues, "monachos deprimere ut clericos extollas? Utrosque operarios messis Dominica recipit et locupletat †." It is delightful to find that these were the views after all, which in general actuated the latter during ages of faith. "The English secular clergy themselves," says Orderic Vitalis, "rejoice respectfully, and with benignity, at the preference which their countrymen evince for monks, from remembering that originally they owed to them the conversion of their nation ‡."

Bourdoise, a celebrated parish priest in the reign of Louis XIII. expressed the sentiments of the French clergy in these remarkable words, which in the hearts of the people at least, will at all times find an echo. "It is an injustice when curates, who have not sufficient priests in their parish, prevent the people from applying to monks. It does not edify them when they hear curates complaining of monks, as if there were not enough of work for both curates and monks. As for me, if I may be allowed to say what I think, in my conscience, I believe that without monks, that is, if there had not been monks, we should at present be without faith and without religion, or at least an hundred times worse than we are. I hope I may not give displeasure to curates, but God grant that they do not deceive themselves. If a curate have any portion of the spirit of the tonsure, if he do not want monks in his parish, he will at least take care to live in peace and good understanding with them. I approve extremely of what a holy personage, Penitentiary of Loretto, said formerly, that he saw only one

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* Touron, Vie de S. Thomas, Wadding, An. Min. iv. ad an. 1257.

† Præf. in 11 Sæc. Ben. 2.

‡ Lib. xii.

remedy to reestablish true piety in the church, and that was to reestablish parishes; and to do that efficaciously, if he could advise the pope, he said that he would desire him to take monks from the most holy monasteries, and make them priests of parishes [*]." To such a measure, however, the admirable clergy of France would never have objected. An historian of Soissons remarks, that the building of a chapel in the street of the Minims, which was to be served by monks of St. John-des-Vignes, met with no obstacle from the curate of St. Remy, who might have objected to this encroachment on his rights [†]."

But let us hear the secular clergy of the middle ages. Speaking of the monks generally. "The life of monks," says Peter of Blois, "of whom there are diverse kinds, for the tunic of Joseph is of many colours, and the spouse of Christ is clothed with variety, I venerate with all the affection of my heart, and I embrace their feet with the arms of most devout humility; for I know that above all seculars, whether clerks or laics, they adhere more closely to the footsteps of the apostles;" and again, he says, "truly in the bowels of Christ every holy order I love, I magnify, I venerate and adore. For a long time I used to have always with me some man of your order, a witness of my conversation, and a guardian angel of my body and soul; but above all, I loved one, dear to God and men, who from being rich made himself poor for Christ. In his friendship, I glory; preferring it to all my relations with the court and in the palace. Doubtless he is the friend of God. Honey and milk are on his tongue, and his countenance is composed to a joyful serenity, with a certain expression of angelic peace. His memory I place as a seal upon my heart [‡]." The humility with which the secular contrasted their state with that of the regular clergy, is often most strikingly expressed. Thus writing to a friend who had become a Cistercian monk, and praising the wisdom of his choice, the archdeacon says, "you have ascended the mountain of sacrifice, but I am still remaining in the valley, 'Heu mihi, quia incolatus meus a Deo prolongatus est' *"! and in his sermon to the people in the vulgar tongue, which he afterwards, by desire of his brother translated into Latin, speaking of the necessity of their reading the Holy Scriptures, to make their lives correspond with them, he says, "to us seculars, who are not only in the world but of the world, who of the cup of Babylon are often drunken to loathing and sickness, to us, I say, is most useful and fruitful that application of mind, consisting in the perusal of the Scriptures, which leads to a fear of the Judge who is to judge the world by fire †." It would be easy to multiply testimonies of this kind; but in fact the cases of exception were so rare, if we take into account the whole tract of faithful ages, that I deem it needless to proceed. It is certain that the religious orders in general, so far from being an offence and a source of discord to the secular clergy, only supplied them with a constant occasion to exercise that pacific, charitable, and reverential spirit, which characterised their own profession. But it will be said, perhaps, that the privileges and exemptions of the monks indicate that their relation with the episcopacy was at least of an ambiguous character. The fact is undoubtedly, as Martene observes on occasion of his visit to the Abbey of St. Maximin at Treves, that the exemptions of monasteries are almost as ancient as monasteries themselves, the most learned and holy bishops having always deemed it necessary to provide against the enterprises of some prelates who might come after them ‡. There were in all but three classes of monasteries, those of the jurisdiction and diocese of the ordinary, those in the diocese, but exempt from his jurisdiction; and those which possessed a separate territory of their own, though not so as to constitute a diocese. The abbots of St. Martin of Tours, of St. Denis, of Lobbes, in Hainault, and some others, were bishops within the walls. The monastery of Mount Cassino constituted a real episcopacy and a diocese in itself §.

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[*] Sentences Chrét. de Bourdoise, xxix. xl.

[†] Hist. de Soissons, ii. 199.

[‡] Pet. Bles. cont. Depravatorem.

During the first ages the monasteries in Ireland were both abbeys and bishoprics; each superior was abbot

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* Pet. Bles. Epist. iv.

† Pet. Bles. Serm. lxv.

‡ Voyage lit. 286.

§ Excurs. Hist. in Chronic. S. Monast. Casin.

and bishop of the surrounding district; and it was not till later times that the episcopal jurisdiction was separated from the abbeys. Now, though as we before remarked, abuses crept in here which monks themselves desired to remove, there can be no doubt but that the interests of peace often required these exemptions, "we know," says Peter of Blois, "that these exemptions for the most part were granted by the Roman pontiffs for the sake of securing the quiet of the monasteries, and in consequence of the tyranny of some bishops *." The historian of Rheims observes, that the monks obtained many of these privileges as a protection against the ruinous expenses in which they would have been otherwise involved, by the grandeur and military character of some prelates, who had not the spirit of their order †. "Some bishops," as St. Anselm says in an epistle to Pope Urban, "rejoiced not so much to nourish monasteries with paternal piety, and to instruct them with episcopal care, as to oppress them with a certain austere domination and self-will ‡."

The Abbot Faustus, of Lerins, in the fifth century, in a discourse to some prelates who had originally been monks, condemns the forgetfulness of those who think no more of the cloister which had nourished and consoled them. "What is more grievous than to forget suddenly the fraternal society and consolation! The birds themselves love their nests; wild beasts love the places in which they were nourished; they love their dens and pastures, and though by their natural liberty they leave their own, they soon return again to them §." "Piligrinus, Archbishop of Cologne, persecuted with singular hate," says Trithemius, "on what grounds I know not, the Irish monks of our order, faithfully serving the Lord in the monastery of St. Martin, in Cologne. Shortly before his death, in 1036, he said to Elias, their abbot, on my return I will expel you Irish monks. However, he never did return alive, for he died on that journey, a good man in other respects, and from childhood regularly educated under the monastic discipline, in the Abbey of

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* Pet. Bles. Epist. 68. ad Alex. 111.

† Anquetil, Hist. de Rheims, ii. 279.

‡ S. Anselmi Epist. ii. 33.

§ Hist. de Frejus.

Burckard *," In general, the contention between bishops and abbeys became most considerable after the year 1215. To observe the pacific and dignified spirit of the monks on these occasions, let us hear Peter the Venerable, addressing a bishop.

"Since the breach of charity is such a weight before God, I ought not to dissemble; as to be moved for justice is no breach of charity, but an action of equity. I have resolved not to conceal my mind to you, but to reveal what instigates me, as if to a friend without disguise. It has been related to us, that you, I say it saving fraternal peace, say things disparaging of the monastic order, and seize the most trifling occasion to lacerate it, declaiming in public assemblies, extenuating its good, and aggravating with rhetorical language, light excesses, such as must belong to men who are not angels. It is said that in your synod, before the clergy and people, you prayed that God might destroy the pride of Cluny, and you charged them to pray the Lord to this effect. And I wish that the merciful Saviour may destroy in us, and in all who are his, not alone the walls of pride, but all those of Satan's crew to the ground, that he may construct in their place the spiritual Jerusalem. But if this was to be said, it was not to be in a way of derision; if there was to be admonition, there was to be no preaching; if there was to be prayer, there was to be no declamation. For be it so; we are proud, we are sinners: nevertheless, the sins of the brethren were not to be proclaimed in the church: the faults of monks were not to be adduced in example before the people, lest the people should be drawn to imitate proud monks, especially those of Cluny, lest they should be taught to believe that the pride which they heard was notable in monks, was less damnable in themselves. Your wisdom ought to have preached this to the chapter at Cluny, and not before the people of Tarawan. This ought to have been brought without the knowledge of the people, to the ears of the brethren, not to the ears of the people, without the knowledge of the brethren, in order that exhortation might correct, and not declamation defame them; for the brethren of Cluny, so widely scattered over the earth, cannot hear the bishop disputing about their pride, though they might have heard him, if he

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* Chron. Hirsaug.

had spoken concerning it in their chapter, at which he has been present twice or thrice, when he exhilarated their pride by promise of his friendship. Not so did the Bishop Augustin proclaim the sins of the brethren, whether true or false, before the people; for he says, " ubi oritur peccatum, ibi moriatur; nec ad plures ejus correctio quam notitia extendatur." But where is this pride? What bishop have the monks of Cluny resisted? Whom do they not obey? To whom do they not show reverence? I know not. I know not. God knows; if I knew I would not suffer it; if I knew I would correct it: but since by the grace of God we have almost all the priests of the Latin church for our friends, we pray that we may have you also among them propitious to us. Wherefore have you acted thus with us? If for a just cause, well; if not, see you to it. I spare you lest I should seem to provoke him whom I would address as a friend. In conclusion, I beseech you to observe what, as I above remarked, your benignity promised to us, that it may be far from your holy lips to promise what you will not afterwards fulfil *."

St. Bernard too has to defend a certain abbot from similar attacks; and his apology for him is remarkable; for he says, " if it be a crime to be accepted of God and men, take him away and crucify him. For that this is true of him cannot be denied, as heaven and earth can witness. If it be a crime to be hospitable, benign, sober, chaste, humble; let him be condemned, for, in this respect, of a truth he cannot be excused, the sanctity of his life, and his acquired glory, yielding sufficient proof †."

Such then was the pacific and impressive tone of the monks on these melancholy occasions. However, protection was necessary; and as a modern historian observes, the only way of escape from tyranny was by placing monasteries under the immediate jurisdiction of the pope. The monastery of Fulda, he thinks, was the first which was thus exempted from the jurisdiction of the ordinary; and as he observes, " this transfer was the act of a bishop, the great St. Boniface. In the sequel, the example was followed frequently enough, but even

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* Petri Ven. Abb. Clun. ix. Epist. lib. iv. 8.

† Ep. ccxxxi.

when it was not, the bishops, sensible that the appellant jurisdiction of the pope would be invoked when there was occasion, were constrained to be moderate. "However hostile," he adds, "we may feel in the abstract, to some pretensions of the papal see, we are constrained to acknowledge that they were often exerted for good; and that its interference was loudly demanded, not merely by policy but by necessity *." These exemptions, in fact, were so many proofs of the solicitude of the bishops to protect monasteries. St. Germain, who exempted the Abbot of St. Germain-des-Près from the jurisdiction of the ordinary, was himself a bishop †. Drauscius, in the time of Ebroin, mayor of the Palace, who granted privileges to the convent of St. Geneviève and St. Peter, at Soissons, was himself the bishop of that diocese; and in the charter conveying them, so humbly expressed, saying of himself, nostræ vilitatis extremitatem, he says, at the end, "if any one should attempt aught against this writing, let him be held for the enemy of the poor, and of the servants of God ‡."

Sometimes, it is true, the object of these exemptions was defeated; and, instead of securing peace, they occasioned trouble. "Many monasteries, therefore," as Peter of Blois says, "which were celebrated for sanctity, either never wished to have these immunities, or rejected them when they had obtained them §." Clairvaux, that flower of Citeaux, chose to be subject to the ordinary. But the love with which bishops regarded the religious orders, forms too beautiful a page in the history of peace, and of its institutions, for us to leave it here, obscured by the violence or the meanness of a few unworthy men. "Omnis persona mihi placitura est quæ vita clareat et doctrina." Such was the language of Ives de Chartres ||, and of all the great and holy bishops of the middle ages, whose constant desire was to imitate, as the church sings at the procession on Palm Sunday, the good and clement king, "cui bona cuncta placent."

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* Europe in Mid. Ages, Cyclop. ii. 162.

† Saint Victor, Tableau de Paris, i. 210.

‡ Martin, Hist. de Soissons, i. 259.

§ Pet. Bles. Epist. lxviii.

|| Epist. xcviii.

"There was not a single bishop of Soissons," says the historian of that city, "at all eminent for piety or merit, who did not prove himself the friend and benefactor of abbeys and convents *." An historian of the universal Church must make the same remark; for we should search in vain through all Christian history, to find an example of a good prelate, who, besides evincing a personal affection and reverence for the religious orders, did not recognize and proclaim loudly, like the illustrious confessor of the Rhine in our days, Clement Augustus de Droste-Vischering, Archbishop of Cologne, that monasteries are absolutely necessary to each diocese, for various important and indispensable ends of pastoral care, which can never be accomplished without them †. The ancient bishops, like St. Fulgentius, even built monasteries in which they might live with monks when their other duties were fulfilled, so anxious were they to perfect themselves in that discipline which they were bound to maintain amongst the clergy ‡. When monasteries were destroyed by wars, and the monks dispersed, it used to be holy bishops who rebuilt them and collected again the separated brethren. Thus, St. Amblardus, Archbishop of Lyons, when he found that the Norman ravages were probably at an end, rebuilt in a sumptuous style the abbey of Aisnay; and Burchard, of the same see, solicited King Rodolph of Burgundy to rebuild the abbey of St. Maurice in the Vallais §. Charles de Roucy, the venerable Bishop of Soissons, in 1582, counted it a great happiness in his last years, that he could favour the foundation of a new religious house in that city, in which Minims were to be received for the first time ||. Such were the works with which the holiest bishops desired to close their administration, and when any prelate had unhappily deserted the track of the good Shepherd, a return to a sense of his own duty was always found synonymous with a revival of zeal to favour monasteries, of which an old historian relates a singular example. "Bishop Reginard of Liege," he says, "experi-

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* Martin, Hist. de Soissons.

† Treatise on the Religious Liberty of Catholics, Münster, 1838.

‡ S. Ambros. lib. x. Ep. 82. Serm. 15. Sicilia Sacra, i. 604.

§ Paradin, Hist. de Lyon, lib. ii. 29. 31.

|| Martin, Hist. de Soissons, ii. 468.

enced what the Lord said by the prophet. 'Venies usque ad Babylonem, et ibi liberaberis;' for he came to the confusion of great sin; and then a look from on high, like that which melted Peter, made him tremble and weep. He resolved to rebuild the church of the monastery of St. Laurence; so early on the third of February his men came upon the roof and began to pull it down with a great noise; for it had been decided the evening before in the bishop's house, that to the Abbot Stephen still taking rest that sound should be the first announcement of his intention*." When Hugues II., Bishop of Grenoble, was calumniated as having vexed some Cluniac monks, he sent the letter of accusation to Peter the venerable; and the Abbot of Cluny replied, that other grounds for detraction must be sought for, besides such supposed hostility, which he could himself disprove. Thus, to suppose a bishop capable of nourishing hostility to monks was then counted an infamous detraction. When a certain prelate elect, wishing to decline the episcopacy, alleged his devotion to a cloistral life, Fulbert, Bishop of Chartres, replied to him, "The love of the monastic state would rather make you worthy than unworthy of the episcopal grade†." The attachment of bishops to the monks in ages of faith was not such as might be expressed in terms of a general decent acquiescence with the fact of their existence in the Church. Obealtus Marinus, a holy and humble man, the first Bishop of Venice in 773, would never as long as he lived suffer two monks of St. Hilary to stir from his side ‡. Richard, Archbishop of Canterbury, commending himself to the prayers of the Cistercian order, exclaims, "O desirable tabernacles, O venerable congregation, O Cîteaux, how great is thy house, how fruitful in sons, how magnificent in tongues, how glorious in people!" He trusts that in consideration of their prayers God will pardon his own insufficiency and offences in the episcopal office §. Turstin, Archbishop of York, evinced such affection for the religious orders, and such zeal in protecting them, that St. Bernard wrote to thank him for his devoted attachment [*]. The conduct towards them of Arnulph, Archbishop of Rheims in the tenth century, who is described as having been second to none in piety, was truly paternal. He was styled in consequence Pater Monachorum [†], which words are engraved upon his tomb. The love evinced by bishops for the Mendicant orders from their commencement was no less unequivocal. It is beautifully expressed in the curious letter of Gui Fulcodi, Bishop of Puy, afterwards Pope Clement IV. to the prior of the convent of Montpellier [‡]. Peter of Blois, writing to the bishop of Orleans, commits to his discretion, "The quiet of the monks, the peace of the simple, and the cause of Christ [§]." And he might well; for dear to the bishops of the middle ages was that quiet, that peace! "Prelates," says a Carthusian monk, "ought to repair to solitudes sometimes, to converse with devout men there, in order to compose all turbulent emotions and acquire severity [||]." They did not require to be pressed to adopt this practice, the spirit of which was evinced in early times. Pope Gregory the great sought a refuge thus from the secular occupations consequent upon the pastoral care, in the observance of the rule of St. Benedict [¶]. At the very outset, on the eve of their consecration, bishops used to spend the night in prayer within some monastery. Thus at Beauvais, the bishop elect always kept his vigil in the abbey of St. Lucien [**]. Then in the course of their administration it was the custom of bishops to make retreats from time to time in monasteries. Thus St. Hugues, Bishop of Grenoble, used to retire occasionally to the abbey of the Chaise-Dieu, or to the Grande Chartreuse [††]. We read that the abbey of Glendalough and the holy seclusion of this valley of the lakes, still continued to retain a charm for St. Laurence, when that great man became Archbishop of Dublin in the time of Henry II. It was his delight to retire occasionally to that monastery, and there, in a cave which had been used as an oratory by St. Kevin, he used to pass whole weeks in prayer and contemplation. Thus, like the blessed Pope Gregory, did he look back to his monastery with regret. Henry, Bishop of Liege, leaving the abbey of St. Hubert on one occasion, where he had spent the Lent, was seen to weep through sorrow at being called away from that desirable peace to the multifarious tumults of secular affairs *. Ratherius, Bishop of Verona, only waits till he can finish building a church. "Then," he says to the Empress Adelheid, "I shall be ready to follow your advice; for it would be better for me to fly away and dwell in solitude in my monastery, and there expect my Lord, who would save me from pusillanimity, than any longer to bear such things uselessly, and with injury to my soul †." In fact many holy pontiffs, through the love of peace and solitude and cloistral life, renounced their bishopricks, following the example of St. Gregory Nazianzen, St. Justus, Archbishop of Lyons, St. Vulfran, Bishop of Sens, and Pope Celestine V. John, the predecessor of the great Gerbert, in the see of Ravenna, had withdrawn into a wilderness of the mountains of Capareo. In 1267 Isaac O'Gorman, Bishop of Killaloe, resigned that see and became a monk in the abbey of the Holy Cross. To Mount Cassino came the holy Bishop Bruno, wishing to serve God with more freedom under the monastic habit in that monastery, far from the rumours of the world ‡.

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* Hist. Monast. S. Laurent. Leodiens. ap. Martene, Vet. Script. iv. p. 1061.

† Fulberti Carnotens. Epist. viii.

‡ Italia Sacra, tom. v. 1185.

§ Pet. Bles. Epist. xcvi.

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[*] Epist. xcv.

[†] Hock. Gerbert, 133.

[‡] Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. de S. D. i.

[§] Epist. cxii.

[||] Pet. Sutorus, De Vita Carthus. i. 3.

[¶] Mab. Præf. in I. Sæc. Ben. 7.

[**] Chardon, Hist. des Sacramens, v.

[††] Vie de S. H.

In the eleventh century, Bertrand, Bishop of Frejus, renounced his see, and retired to the abbey of Lerins, where he died in odour of sanctity. On coming to that resolution his words indicated discouragement. "Ego Bertrandus Forojulii Episcopus, videns totum mundum urgeri diversis angustiis et tribulationibus, et sacerdotale regnum decidere, non reperio locum cui me prærogativo amore committam præter Lerinense Cœnobium §."

Walter Mauclerc, Chancellor of England in the reign of Henry III. and Bishop of Carlisle, took refuge in the order of St. Dominic, abandoning all things, even to his cloak, as Matthew Paris says, when he entered the con-

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* Hist. Andaganens. Monast. ap. Martene, Vet. Script. iv. 953.

† Ap. Pez. Thes. Anecdot. vi. 98.

‡ Chron. Cas. iv. 31.

§ Hist. de Frejus, lib. iv.

vent at Oxford*. The abbey of St. Medard at Soissons was chosen by many great prelates for their place of rest after abdicating their sees, numbers of whom were buried beneath its vaults. To monasteries many prelates retired expressly to die. Cardinal George d'Amboise came with this intention to the convent of the Celestins at Lyons. Comparing his own life with that of the monk, brother John, who waited on him in his sickness, he said often to him, "Ah, brother John, my friend, would that I had been brother John." With the same object a great number of bishops chose to retire to the abbey of St. Victor at Paris, in which house the bishops of Paris in the thirteenth century had an apartment, where they used to spend some days occasionally. This abbey was full of their tombs†. In 1170 Gerungus, Bishop of Misnia, retired to die in the monastery of Monte Sereno‡. John Milet, Bishop of Soissons, who towards the end of his life concentrated his munificence on the abbey of Longpont, was in the act of returning from a visit to the Chartreuse of Bourg-Fontaine, in spite of his eighty-eight years, when he fell sick of his last malady. He ordered that his heart should be sent to the Celestins of Paris, in token of his affection for that monastery. "This was the last Bishop of Soissons chosen by the chapter and the people," says Cabaret,—"the last of those great bishops," says Martin, "who were animated by that zeal for the house of the Lord, and by ardent patriotism§." That nothing might be wanting to display the union of the episcopacy with the religious orders, it was the custom in the twelfth century, when a bishop died, to carry his body about from monastery to monastery, leaving it a day and night in each, till the whole number of religious houses in the diocese had been visited. This usage was observed, for instance, at the funeral of Adalbero, Archbishop of Treves||. In conclusion we must observe, that this attachment of bishops and of the secular clergy to the monks was not exactly, after all, a merit of supererogation, in consideration of

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* Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. S. D.

† Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, i. ii. 5.

‡ Chronic. Montis Sereni.

§ Martin, Hist. de Soissons, ii. 356.

|| Ap. Martene, Vet. Script. iv. 207.

which all who loved peace and the holy institutions established for its maintenance, owed them a debt of gratitude. According to the Catholic religion, they could not have acted otherwise without a perilous risk, which rendered it needless to speak of what might be the consequence to their reputation among all men of cultivated minds, who looked on quietly with the eyes of Catholics, whose common verdict, though profoundly disdained in the society of a party, would faithfully represent that of the Christian world, to which, whatever might be their intrenchments, they could not be wholly and for ever insensible. In the first place, as a necessary consequence of the principle on which the monastic orders were founded, it is certain that all Christians, whether personally belonging to them or not, were strictly bound in conscience to venerate them; and the steps of the demonstration may be stated in the shape in which logicians are accustomed to exhibit processes of reasoning, in order to show their conclusiveness; for as St. Catherine of Sienna says, "The evangelical precepts cannot be observed, unless the counsels are also observed," which proposition she explains thus, "The perfect despise all things mentally and actually: while others, indeed, who possess exterior things, observe the precepts actually, and the counsels only mentally, though not actually. And because the counsels are tied and allied to the precepts; therefore no one can observe the precepts without also observing the counsels, if not actually, at least mentally; that is, possessing these riches with humility, not as being their own, but as lent to them for a good end, with freedom of heart and an interior contempt for them; so that although they may possess them actually, yet in no manner do they contradict the divine will*." So we arrive at our first clause, that all Christians must observe the counsels, at least mentally. But to have one's mind alienated from the monastic orders would be incompatible with a mental observance of the counsels: for in theology it would be as idle to separate a love of the counsels from a love of monasteries, as it would be in philosophy to detach the matter from the form of knowledge; the one process leading as necessarily to a substitution of abstract speculation, and perhaps hypocrisy for religion, as the other to the adoption of a geometrical conception, or an idea for reality. Therefore an alienation of mind from monasteries could not be compatible with an actual observance of the precepts; or, in other words, with the clear conscience, and the hope of one at peace with God.

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* St. Cath. Senens. Dialog. Tract. i. c. 47.

Moreover, from the authoritative ground of the monastic institution, there was no alternative for Christians obedient to the Church. For the holy see in every age took the monasteries under its especial protection. Its voice was always consonant with the words of Innocent III., with which he commenced his epistle to all the archbishops and bishops, in whose dioceses were houses of the Præmonstratensian order. "If you are true lovers of the Christian religion," said the pontiff, "you will cause no trouble to religious men, in respect either to their persons or to their property, since you are bound rather to deliver them from every inconvenience *." In later times the Mendicant orders and the Jesuits were invested with the same inviolable character, as the acts of the Roman pontiffs from the present glorious Gregory through former times can bear witness; the Popes Gregory IX., Innocent IV., and Alexander IV. showing such parental love to the Franciscans, that their anniversaries are celebrated in all convents of that order, as those of their peculiar benefactors †.

Lastly, a regard to their own tranquillity in death might alone have been sufficient to secure to the religious orders the favour of all who sought to depart from this life in the peace of the Church; for it would have been small consolation otherwise, after a life spent in troubling and disparaging and counteracting the monastic orders, to have heard chanted round them, when there was no longer space for sophistry, those prayers in commendation of the soul, which would sound like a satire or a judgment on their whole administration,—"Omnes sancti monachi et eremitæ, orate pro eo."

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* Epist. Inn. III. lib. i. 200.

† Annal. Min. iv.

CHAPTER XVIII.

In that remarkable passage of Plato's Republic, where Socrates speaks of the few wise men who retire from the world to keep themselves pure, like persons who take shelter under a wall from the dust which the wind raises in clouds, and which covers all others with its impurities, that philosopher concludes with these words, "Nor, indeed, is it a small matter to retire in this manner, and keep aloof from the world. Nor yet, again, is it the greatest, since they do not meet with a state which accords with them; for in a state that accorded with them, they would not only save and benefit themselves, but also they would serve others and the whole city *.

Now the monks deserved this highest praise, according to the judgment of the Athenian sage; for not only did they keep themselves in peace and unspotted, but they caused multitudes of other men, and sometimes whole states, to escape from the tumults and impurities of the blind and unsanctified world. Let us proceed to speak then of the influence of the monks upon the manners of society in ages of faith. At first sight, indeed, the separation seems wide and insurmountable. What a contrast between the adorable goodness of a St. Germain, as described by Fortunatus of Poictiers, and the barbarism and perfidy of the sons of Clovis,—between the cloister and the palace! Here we can only observe the whirlwind, and the few who take shelter. Nevertheless, after a while, we shall be able to discern the results of this gradual and silent action of the few. The peaceful prove stronger than the ferocious; for these tigers, these destroyers of cities, like him who laid Milan in ashes, begin soon to tremble before the holy abbots, and, like tame beasts of the forest, to fawn at their feet. The monk, in those early times, passes through the paths of men as the charmed bird that haunts the serpent's cavern. You think it is only because he feels himself invulnerable; but wait a little. "All shall relent, tears shall flow, and hearts beat with such intent as renovates the world."

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* De Repub. lib. vi.

"The fame of St. Richarius' sanctity spreading far and wide," says the chronicle of his abbey, "King Dagobert came with all his train to visit him, that he might commend himself to his prayers. The servant of God strengthened him with his blessing, and corrected him with the free voice of sacerdotal authority; warning him not to become proud with power, not to trust in uncertain riches, not to be lifted up by the vain sound of applause *."

Totila came to visit St. Benedict in his cave. Long on the earth did the haughty king prostrate himself, as soon as he saw the servant of Jesus Christ. Thrice did the holy man say to him, "Surge." He refused to rise, till the saint raised him up; sparing not reproof, but repeating "Multa mala facis, multa mala fecisti, jam aliquando ab iniquitate compescere †."

Constantine wrote a letter to St. Antony, and styled him his father. Antony resolved to send no answer; but, on his disciples urging him to it, he wrote as follows: "Despise the world; think of the last judgment; remember that Jesus Christ is the only true and eternal King; practise humanity and justice." The Benedictine monk, who has recorded the deeds of the counts of Anjou, concludes his address to Henry, King of England, with these lines:

"Vive precor, sed vive Deo, nam vivere Mundo
Mors est; sed vera est vivere vita Deo."

Such were the lessons which kings received from those who wore the cowl; when the hooded men were feared and venerated, as strong in the force of innocence; when, as in Saxon language, "God's curse, and that of all hooded heads," constituted the only power that could save the pacific, disarm, or intimidate their enemies. Monks had the secret to move the conscience of the haughtiest sinners; so that, at least, at their death they should give to those whom they had oppressed a salutary spectacle. "Philip, Count of Namur," says Cæsar of Heisterbach, "the son of Baldwin, Count of Flanders, showed such contrition at his death, that no one saw the like in any

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* Chron. S. Richar. ap. Dacher. Spicileg. iv.

† Chronic. Casinens. xv.

other person at the time. He made his confession to four abbots of our order, moved every one present to tears by his discourse, and besought his confessor to tie a rope round his neck, and drag him to the market-place, that he might die there, as he had lived, like a dog*." A more striking instance occurs in the chronicles of St. Denis, where King Chilperic and Fredegond are related to have been terrified at their having oppressed the people, when the death of their children came to verify the monastic warnings. The words of the queen are remarkable: "Ardons donques les lettres que nous avons escriptes, et pour la santé de nostre lignée et de nos ames effaçons les lettres où les exactions sont scélées, qui sont à la destruction des povres." This admonition made the king restrain his avaricious heart; "et lui amolia tant la dureté de son corage qu'il geta et ardi au feu les autentiques en quoi la loi estoit escripte pour le peuple grever†."

Although the monks retired, therefore, to places of shelter at a distance, as into the heart of forests, their influence was not unfelt by the society from the evils of which they fled. The world perceived them at a distance, like the castles which a traveller, passing along the plain, sees perched on rocks among the mountains‡. Men sought to be associated with them in prayers. Thus, in the annals of Corby, we read: "This year, 1116, three counts of Insula, Gunter, Otho, Stephen, and two of Pyrmont, with their wives, are received into the fraternity of St. Vitus; an honour for which nobles and princes contended §."

"We are visited: we are known," says one who had withdrawn farthest: "what nation has not heard of the Carthusian order? what region has not seen the Carthusian light? The Carthusians are removed in hidden places, but men know where they are, and, though not seen, the fragrance of their good example is felt ||." So in a theatre, while beholding some grand pageantry to the sound of heroic music, a spectator sometimes suddenly, and unaccountably, withdraws in mind, and pictures to himself the angelic life of the humble monk

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* Cæsar. Heisterbach. ii. c. 18.

† Chroniques de S. Denis, liv. iii. c. xi.

‡ Lacordaire.

§ Ap. Leibnitz. Script. Bruns. iii.

|| Pet. Sutorus de Vita Carthus. lib. i. c. 3.

within his cloister, and feels from that moment a holy renovation. Petrarch often experienced such feelings; and in his letter to John Birel, general of the Carthusians, he seems under this impression. "Full of astonishment," he says, "and admiration, I speak to you as I would speak to Jesus Christ himself, who, no doubt, dwells in your heart; for the heart of the just, is it not the temple of God? They say you are an angel, and that you lead the life an angel would do if he was on earth. For my part, I behold you as a star which rises from the monastery of the Carthusians, to enlighten a sinful world; as we see the morning sun rise from the eastern mountains to illuminate the earth. How happy are you! how miserable am I! While I am struggling with the tempestuous waves of time, you are arrived safe in port, and, so to speak, entered into the porch of paradise, with the hope, or rather the assurance, of a blessed and endless life." After beseeching his prayers that God would inspire him with unfeigned charity, perfect piety, and holy religion, he continues: "From whence can my confidence arise to a man I have never seen? It is not my merit which gives it, but my love for you, and for your pious flock, and the idea of your piety. We sometimes love those best we do not personally behold. Sinner as I am, though I embrace you tenderly with my soul, I wish to enfold you in my arms, and kiss that hand I revere; that hand consecrated to God. To this is joined that precious pledge I have confided to your care; that only brother, enrolled in the militia of Jesus Christ, under the banners of your protection. Of all the gifts I have received from nature, none is so dear to me as he is: I know that you love him as your son; you have taken him from me: I am consoled, I rejoice; nay, I glory in a brother worthy to serve Jesus Christ in your holy family." The Carthusian, in his answer, reprimands him severely for the eulogistic style of his letter, saying that it was not right to praise any one to his face; and concludes, by urging him to employ the talents which God has given him in works on morals and devotion.

But the people followed such men to their deserts. "Vital," says Orderic, "who had once been chaplain to Robert, Count de Mortain, retired into a desert with some monks, and built a monastery in a wood, amidst the ruins of some ancient buildings which he found. In his sermons he spared neither the weak nor the powerful. He raised his voice as a trumpet, announcing to the Christian people its vices, and to the house of Jacob its sins. Hence kings and princes respected him. The multitude arose before day to go to hear his words: all classes of society were profoundly moved by his just reprimands. Thus did this skilful man sow the good seed, and combat for God, during seven years in the convent which he had founded, till his death *."

How many men in cities were trained by monks to live justly? What integrity and purity would belong to the commercial character, if formed by their rules, as laid down by Dionysius the Carthusian, in his dialogue between a monk and a merchant †? or by Ratherius, that monk of Lobbes, whose work is so curious, as showing what it was to be considered a good Christian in the time of Charles the Bald. How many in the country did the monk edify or reclaim? "He came to the lone fir-tree on the rock, and with his sweet and mighty eloquence the hearts of those who watched it did unlock, and made them melt in tears of penitence." Wild ferocious men, who stood near him, marked and never forgot his words. Let us hear Orderic Vitalis: "A certain man of Brittany, named Goisfred, had been a robber in his youth, but subsequently, by some such inspiration of God, he amended his life, married a legitimate wife, separated himself from his barbarous and murderous satellites, and laboured with his hands to maintain himself. He now even made alms with what he thus laboriously gained, and distributed to the poor, to clerks, to hermits, and monks. Above all, he sought the society of the monks of Ouche, and became their brother in Jesus Christ, observing all the rules of the fraternity, and coming to the abbey at all the chief festivals, and making his offering, leading his horse, loaden with bread, for the monks, though he had sometimes to cut his way through the snow, and to pass swollen torrents ‡."

Monks could detect the need of inward purification at the first glance, on meeting with a stranger. When the holy Joseph of Cupertino received a letter from the Cardinal Fachonetti, he said to the youth who brought it from

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* Lib. viii.

† Dion. Carthus. de Justo Pretio Rerum.

‡ Lib. vi.

Senigaglia, "My son, you serve a noble master, and are you not ashamed to go forth with an unwashed face? Go wash yourself, that when your master shall see you he may not be displeased!" The poor messenger, who knew that he had washed his face, was all confusion at such a rebuke; but when the friar, smiling, proceeded to explain that it was the heart which was yet to be made clean, he was so astonished and moved, that he would not return to his master until he had made a general confession[*].

St. Honoratus, whose monastery was near the summit of the Alps, directed all the people of that region to serve God. "Whoever desired Christ," says St. Hilary, "sought Honoratus, and whoever sought Honoratus certainly found Christ; he invited all with outstretched arms to embrace the love of Christ[†]." Nor was it only as a fortuitous event, on rare occasions, that monks exercised this influence: they knew that they were at all times bound to do so; for as the universal Doctor taught them,

> "Non minus hic peccat qui censum in agro,
> Quam qui doctrinam claudit in ore suam.
> Absit commissum sine lucro ferre talentum,
> Nec servos nequam vos vocet ira Dei[‡]."

Hence we read that they were continually seeking to impart to others the peace of their own hearts. "Walter, the tenth Abbot of Villars, that venerable father," says the historian of the abbey, "all wonderfully inflamed with the fire of charity, and all absorbed in God, desired nothing else in the world but to lead men to religion[§]." St. Columban, in his three monasteries on the border of Lorraine, gave instruction during twenty years to the surrounding people[||]. St. Lyé, Abbot of the monastery of Saints Gervaise and Protaise, in the diocese of Troyes, in the time of Childebert, when going to work with his own hands in the vineyard of the abbey, on the hill of Massey, used to take bread along with him to give to poor people, that, while they eat near him, he might preach to them on the fear and love of God *!

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[*] Goerres Christlikhe Mystik. ii. 103.

[†] Hil. in Vit. S. Honor.

[‡] Alani de Insulis. lib. Parabol.

[§] Hist. Mon. Villar. 5, ap. Martene, Thes. Anecd. iii.

[||] Jonas in Vit. S. Columb. ap. Mabil.

St. William, Abbot of Hirschau, in the eleventh century, going to visit a cell on the banks of the Danube, on his way came to a mean hut, which he entered with one of his companions, leaving the rest to walk on. On entering he perceived a very poor woman, and, without ceremony, he sat down by the fire. Casting his eyes around, and observing the extreme poverty of the hut, he asked how she and her husband contrived to live. "Their life," she replied, "was one of misery; bread and water being all they could procure by the labour of their hands." The husband soon arriving, was asked about his religious faith and practice. Both he and his wife were too far distant from any church or oratory to assist at the public worship; and, in addition, they were grossly ignorant of the first truths of Christianity. They knew not even what the Gospel meant, nor whether a revelation had been made to man. "In the bosom of a German forest, such deplorable ignorance need not surprise us," observes a modern historian who quotes the passage; "it exists at the present day in the most populous parts of England." The abbot, however, was deeply affected. "What wonder," he observed; "that, as you know not God, who alone is able to supply you with the necessaries of life, you should be thus abandoned." He began to inform them, enjoined them to follow him the next day to the cell, and made them continue their visits till they were sufficiently instructed in the truths of religion, having meanwhile amply relieved their temporal wants.

The influence of the mendicant orders has come before us in so many forms in the course of the preceding books, that it may seem superfluous to dwell upon it here. "Father Francis," exclaims the annalist of his order, "thou art made a seal of divine similitude. Many struck with amaze at thy children, have honoured God. In the nations of Europe, in the vast provinces of Asia and America, they led the blind into the way which they knew not, and caused them to walk in paths that were unknown to them; they changed their darkness into

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* Desguerrois, Hist. du Diocèse de Troyes, 110.

light, and made their rough ways plain *." The seraphic founder endeavouring once to persuade a poor man to pardon his master who had refused to pay him his wages, at length took off his mantle and gave it to him, as a compensation for the loss, asking him only in return to pardon that master for the love of God †. It is no marvel, as friar Antonio de Guevara says to the Count of Miranda, that "more persons were converted to God by such sermons than by books." "By means of the friar Savonarola's sermons such numbers went to confession, that every day of the week seemed to be Easter ‡." These results were immense, no doubt, to all classes of society; but in relation to the poor especially it would be difficult to form an adequate estimate of their value. There is one title which must ever belong to the monks and friars of every order, and distinguish them in the judgment of the wise above all other benefactors of the human race. They were universally the friends of the poor, not in theory and semblance, but in deeds and in truth. Whoever possesses the happy recollection of having seen them in the exercise of their ministry, instead of questioning their right to this title so well becoming the lovers and dispensers of peace, will only heave a deep sigh for the peasants of lands where it is unknown, and exclaim with Dante—

"O thou northern site! bereft
Indeed, and widow'd, since of these deprived §."

Yes, a catholic population of its friars may well be ever joyous. Their intercourse with the poor is characterized by a manner which no one can mistake or misinterpret. For see how they receive the rustic group before their gates; kissing the white hairs of the old men, caressing the children, catechizing the barefooted stripling, with as much care and tenderness as if he were the son of a prince; giving the dowry for the maid, paying the debts of the indigent, sending provision to the house of the infirm, and filling the hearts of all with gladness. Evidently the strongest monastic sympathies were with the people, with the majority, as was natural.

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* An. Minor. tom. xvi. † Diego de Navarre, i. 47.

‡ Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. de S. D. iii. 23.

§ Purg. i.

The Spanish saying, "Viva la gente morena!" would be a cry consonant to their feelings; for the brown or sunburnt sons of the poor were naturally most dear to those who wished to be themselves poor, and to be treated as the poor. Ælred, Abbot of Rievaulx, always styled himself brother of the poor of Christ that are in Rievaulx; and the poet who best knew them, styles him whom the angel from the east marked with the sign of the living God, "The glorious poor one of Christ." Nevertheless, the illustrious author of the Legislation Primitive, in tracing to some of the religious orders the rise of the democratic spirit which gained such an undue ascendancy in later times, ought not to have forgotten that their influence was expressly directed to produce peace and love between the different classes of society; to induce the poor to respect the great for conscience sake, and to beware of judging them, or of murmuring against the institution of property.

But now retracing our steps to earlier times, let us observe how the mitred abbots were practically the poor man's friend. Let us hear an instance recorded of St. Wandregisile, Abbot of Fontanelle.

"One day as he was going to visit king Dagobert, at the moment when he was approaching the palace, there was a poor man whose cart was overturned before the king's gate. Many persons were entering and going out, but the greatest part passed by and scorned him. The man of God arriving, saw the impiety which these children of insolence were committing, and immediately alighting from his horse, he stretched out his hand to the poor man, and they two together set the cart up again. Many of those who were present seeing him defiled with mud, began to laugh and to insult him; but he paid no regard to them, following with humility the example of his Master; for the Lord himself has said in the Gospel, "If they have called the father of the family Beelzebub, what will they not call his servants *?"

It would be endless to commemorate the abbatial solicitude in providing for the wants of the poor. A few characteristic instances may be added, however, to those we have seen in a former book.

"He had his hand always open for the poor," says a

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* Acta Sanct. Ord. S. Ben. tom. ii. 528.

monk, speaking of Lord William, the eleventh Abbot of Villars. "It is above our simplicity," he adds, "to describe how solicitous and benign he was. We can judge of the temperance and sobriety of his table and mode of life from examining the ancient registrar in which formerly all the expenses of the abbots were written down; for there we find that he expended scarcely twelve pounds in the whole circle of the year, and yet, though so sparing in his own food and raiment, thus was he bountiful *." Robert Champeaux, or Campbell, Abbot of Tavistock, with the consent of his convent in 1291, appropriated for ever the whole profits arising from an estate called Westlydeton, granted two years before to his abbey by Sir Odo le Arcedeakne, to the providing of the poor with clothes and shoes; the annual distribution of which was made in the cloisters on the day of All-souls †. We have observed elsewhere, that, above all in times of scarcity, the monastic resources were placed at the disposition of the poor; but what was, perhaps, most singular on these occasions was, the skill with which the monks administered to them. During the long pestilence and famine in France, from the year 1348 to 1350, the historian of Soissons says, "that the abbey of Notre-Dame in that city gave prodigious alms, and nevertheless suffered no notable diminution in its revenues ‡." So general and unremitting were the liberalities of the monks, that all infringement of their rights was felt to be an immediate act of oppression of the poor. The English thus complained in the time of Henry VIII. of "the dissolution of the monasteries, and of the consequent destitution of the poorealty of the realm." From that time, in fact, the office of the poor, whom St. Odo, the Abbot of Cluny, used to call "the porters of heaven," was permitted to become a sinecure, and men could only associate charity with ruins, saying with him who sung of Rokeby—

"When yonder broken arch was whole,
'Twas there was dealt the weekly dole:
And where yon tottering columns nod,
The chapel sent the hymn to God.

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* Hist. Mon. Vill. i. 6. ap. Martene, Thes. Anec. iii.

† Oliver, Historical Collections rel. to the monasteries of Devon.

‡ Martin, ii. 211.

So flits the world's uncertain span!
Nor zeal for God, nor love for man,
Gives mortal monuments a date
Beyond the power of time and fate."

But the monks were not content with affording relief at their own doors, or sending assistance to the houses of the poor. In the annals of Corby in Saxony we have this significant notice. "This year, 941, a small hospital was built at Wisarah with a chapel of St. Lazarus, in which sick, and pilgrims, and poor people, are sustained by the monastery [*]." Muratori, in his dissertation on hospitals, so many of which were founded by the monks, acknowledges that in regard to such manifestations of charity, our times can hardly be said to equal those ages which he is fond of designating as iron [†]. The monks also studied with a singular acuteness of discrimination to provide measures for the improvement of the condition of the poor. Thus it was Barnaby of Terni, a friar minor, who first thought of a mount of piety to preserve them from usurers. He made the experiment at Perugia, which succeeded, and then Leo X. authorized the institution which has been so much favoured by succeeding popes. But the beneficial action of the monks in regard to the poor was far from being confined to their personal exertions. What they accomplished themselves was much; but what they taught and caused others to perform was still more; for in ages of faith the monastic influence had, in some measure, anticipated the future judgment, when the first shall be last and the last first. The act of St. Germain, when he gave to a poor man who asked alms the horse which king Childebert had given him, "ayant plus chière," as say the chronicles of St. Denis, "la voix du pauvre que le don du roy [‡]," can only be appreciated by considering the effect which it must have produced on the public mind. "Amicitia pauperum," says St. Bernard, "regum amicos constituit; amor paupertatis reges. You see the dignity of holy poverty [§]." The monastic influence made honourable both him who gave and him who received alms, even though the latter was the *πτωχὸν πανδήμιον*, for he too was taught by monks as by Ratherius, that he might be a good christian if it was not sloth or avarice, or a neglect of the apostle's precept, "Qui non vult operari nec manducet," which had made him become a beggar [*]. In modern times a race like the suitors of Penelope has returned, armed with the same old pagan maxims, as in Homer's time, to justify their neglect and abhorrence of the poor; men who can truly boast, like Antinous, that no poor man ever hears their conversation—

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[*] Ap. Leibnitz, Script. Bruns. iii.
[†] Antiq. It. D. xxxvii.
[‡] Liv. iii. c. 5.
[§] Epist. ciii.

> ——— οὐδέ τις
> ἡμετέρων μύθων ξεῖνος καὶ πτωχὸς ἀκούει [†].

When Ulysses proposes to apply in the disguise of a mendicant, Eumæus bids him beware of the rich inmates of the palace, and of their well-dressed pampered servants. In the middle ages there would have been no such young domestics to revile one so roughly clad—

> πτωχῷ λευγαλέῳ ἐναλίγκιον ἠδὲ γέροντι,
> σκηπτόμενον.

The monk or friar had been in that house teaching better things to young and old, having ever on his tongue the line of St. Columban—

> "Divitis opprobrium gemitus est pauperis ingens [‡]."

No one would have dared therefore to tax the poor wanderer with laziness and with being good for nothing, or to style him—

> πτωχὸν ἀνιηρὸν, δαιτῶν ἀπολυμαντῆρα.

repulsing him for the reason urged by the proud Antinous, that there were already near them enough of insufferable poor, the disgrace of a festivity. Homer represents the richest of the suitors as the most insulting. It was Ctesippus, ἀθεμίστια εἰδὼς, trusting in his immense treasures, who joined mockery to cruelty, and was the first to assail the poor stranger; but even the most friendly and benign urge the unreasonableness of supposing that any one could be guilty of such folly as to invite a poor man to approach unless he was either a physician, or a maker of spears, or a minstrel who could give pleasure by his singing; and adds, that a poor man, merely as being poor, no one would ever think of calling in [*]. If we look back to a former book, we shall see what a contrast all this presents to catholic manners during ages of faith; but here it should be observed, that it is in a great measure to the monastic influence that this prodigious change was to be ascribed; for the monks, by their sermons and by their example, taught rich men to respect the poor, and held up charitable men as an eternal example; as at the monastery of Renty in Artois, where, on the festival of St. Bertoul, the steward of Count Wambert, who expended all the revenues of the estate of Renty, which his master gave him, in works of charity, one thousand loaves used to be distributed to the poor in memory of his charitable administration of the count's property. The monks were not afraid of displeasing rich patrons by placing before their eyes continually the wants of the poor. The effects of their intercourse with the great may be estimated from hearing the monastic maxim which Petrus Sutorus thus lays down: "To be acquainted with a rich man is a talent for which an account must be given, if it has not been employed in advising him to give alms [†]." In the chronicles of St. Denis the monks complain that rich men sometimes provide for themselves habits and robes of feast, which cost as much as twenty or thirty marks of silver; and that, after wearing them only five or six days, at the first request they give them to a minstrel; which, say they, is lamentable; for the price of such a robe would nourish twenty or thirty poor persons for a year. Philippe Auguste having heard some monks complain of this abuse, resolved thenceforth to give all his old robes and vestments to the poor, as an alms that would give him confidence in God [‡]. But it was not alone by giving and inducing others to give alms that the monks proved their friendship. They evinced it also by constantly endeavouring to infuse greater mildness into the laws, which they stigmatized often as cruel and unjust. They would not have the punishment of death inflicted for offences that even still incur it from our English tribunals *. They remind the great that with God poverty is an excuse for crimes which He declares to be hateful in the rich. The Franciscan, Diego Murillo, reminds the people of Saragossa that it is a rich man and liar who is pronounced to be hateful to God, to show that regard should be had to the miseries and necessities of the poor. One meets with continual proof too of the care which was taken by abbots to abolish every evil custom that had been drawn into oppression of the rustics dwelling near them †. A charter of Gotescalch, Abbot of Nonantula, in which he grants lands and privileges to the people of Nonantula in 1058, begins with these words: "Our omnipotent Lord and Redeemer always invites men to salvation; therefore I, Gotescalch, humble Abbot of the monastery of St. Silvester in Nonantula, with the counsel of the brethren of this monastery, on account of God, and for the utility of the said church, and for the remedy of our souls, provide to ordain things good and useful to all our people now and hereafter dwelling in Nonantula ‡." In fact, the joy of the people, so invariably evinced on the foundation of a new religious house, arose in some measure, no doubt, from their knowing that they were to be no longer under the fisc, but under an abbot.

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[*] Præloquior. lib. i.

[†] xxi. 291.

[‡] S. Columb. Carmen, ap. Canis. Lect. Antiq. 1.

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[*] xx. 287.

[†] De Vit. Carthus. ii. t. ii. c. 4.

[‡] Ad an. 1186.

But to return to the influence of the religious orders in regard to the spiritual interests of society. Here it is obvious they could have but few rivals. Their habits of amiable familiarity with the people, and systematic condescension to men of low estate, alone must have given them preeminence. The Franciscans indeed were expressly enjoined to take a pleasure in conversing with poor and mean persons, and such as are despised by the world §.

Friar Francis of Soriano, a celebrated preacher of the Capuchins, used to avoid great cities and places where he would have noble auditors, and choose villages and little mountain-towns, and obscure places, saying that he always found more fruit produced by the word of God in such places than in great towns and cities ||. The

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* Pet. Bles. de Institut. Episc.

† Martene, Vet. Script. ii. 86.

‡ Muratori, Antiq. Ital. Dissert. xxxvi.

§ Diego de Navarre, les Chroniques des frères Min. lib. i. c. 9.

|| Annal. Capucinorum, 1567.

monastic solicitude for the spiritual interests of the poor, is indicated, too, by material monuments, attesting the care they took to furnish all places near them with proper objects to fill the minds of the illiterate with what their Saviour had done for them, and to excite the people to the practice of frequent prayer. Hence those crosses and stations and inscriptions, which announce the neighbourhood of a convent. "This year," (934,) say the annals of Corby in Saxony, "a little chapel on the wayside was built in the fields of Lüre, for the devotion of passengers *." The institution of laical confraternities for prayer, which produced such fruits of piety among the people, is attributed to St. Bonaventura †. The country round a monastery was never left without spiritual culture; and affecting examples are not wanting of the devotion of the monks in supplying it. Thus we read that every morning a monk used to be sent from Croyland to Spaldyng, to say mass for the people there. It happened once, on the festival of St. Lucy, that very early a dreadful tempest arose, and the boat which carried the monk was lost; and the venerable man, by name Manerius, and greatly religious, was drowned at Wodelode ‡.

Matthew de Bassio, first general of the Capuchins, applied himself with great diligence to animate youth to piety. When himself a boy, it had been his custom to excite other boys to praise our Lord; and when a friar, and an old man, this was again his favourite employment. He established at Forli certain societies of boys, who assembled for instruction in the Christian doctrine. The boys loved him; for he used to make them little presents, so that they used to follow him in troops whenever he went out through the fields or villages. Having preached once to a crowd of boys in a field near Senigaglia, and seeing them exhausted with heat and thirst, he begged a pitcher of wine from a woman; and it seemed as if each boy was able to have a drink from it. At first this institution of boys was laughed at, for this was in 1552; but when the good effects were felt, the people became of a different opinion. On the festival of the Ascension, he led a multitude of them to the top of a high hill, and

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* Ap. Leibnitz, Script. Bruns. iii.

† Annal. Min. iv.

‡ Hist. Croylandens. Rer. Ang. Script. p. 72.

preached to them in few words. "On this day," said he, "the Lord Jesus ascended up to heaven, that he might bless us from heaven. Above,—above is Paradise, where our Jesus dwelleth. I will serve the world no more: I will rise with Jesus: Jesus is my love, my inheritance, and the God of my heart*." The few words of such a monk, coming from a peaceful breast full of truth, produced effects prodigious and durable. Nor can one wonder at it; since, independently of every thing else, few could be insensible to that attraction of the uncommon, that influence of the solitude which encompassed the monk, coming forth from his impenetrable retreat as from a sanctuary of peace, to speak to the multitude with the courage and independence of a celestial messenger. Wherever he appeared, discord and enmities, rivalries and heart-burnings, gave way, as if by a secret charm; and devout people would endeavour, if possible, to pick up some thread from the hem of his habit.

The crowd that followed St. Vincent Ferrier, to receive his benediction after preaching to them on Good Friday at Tortosa, was so great that the bridge of boats sunk under the weight; but no one perished†. "Experience proves," says a monastic writer, "that those who despise this world are the objects of love: for humble men are no offence to any one; and, therefore, much peace and charity accrues: for the humble heart has an invincible power over human wickedness; and hence it is that humble monks in cloisters are so loved by all men‡." When St. Serein, after passing the Alps, had returned to his little monastery in France, all the neighbouring country was filled with joy, which the people testified by hastening to visit him, and lighting fires on the night of his arrival§. When an abbot of Cluny died, it was always necessary, for some days after, to admit the people of the surrounding country, who thither flocked to kiss his feet and his vestments‖. When the people of the town knew of the death of St. John of the Cross, they flocked in such multitudes to the monastery where his body lay, that there was danger of its being injured by the press. What true honours were these! Therefore Cardan the philosopher says, that if you desire durable glory, there is no need either of riches or of the favour of princes. Witness Benedict, Francis, Bernard, Dominic, Albert, Thomas, Bonaventure, and Bruno, not alone poor, but mendicants *. Such was, as the unhappy poet too acknowledges,—

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* Id. ad an. 1552.

† Touron, Hist. des Hom. Illust. de l'Ord. de S. D. v.

‡ Joan à Jesu, Instruct. Novitiorum.

§ Desguerrois, Hist. du Diocèse de Troyes, 161.

‖ Bibliothic. Clun.

> "The glorious doom of those who struggled to keep alive
> The lamp of hope o'er man's bewilder'd lot."

But it was not alone over the poor that the peaceful influence of the monks extended. Charlemagne loved the abbey of St. Denis more than the city of Paris. The monks of St. Gall used always to style him "our Charles," —so familiar was he with their community †. There were few monasteries which did not possess some hooded man whom the great and powerful of the world venerated, so as to desire to serve him with their own hands,—as did the wife of the Emperor Maximus, waiting on St. Martin, ministering as Martha while listening as Mary ‡. "He knew how to accommodate himself, and condescend to all men," says the chronicler, speaking of Charles, the eighth Abbot of Villars in the seventh century; "so that he converted from the vain conversation of the world both nobles and plebeians. An eminent grace did God confer upon him, causing him to be so beloved by great and small, by princes of the earth and their subjects; for princes wished him to be present in their councils, though he never attempted to further their interests whenever any thing was to be done contrary to God and to the honour of holy religion §."

Of St. Maiolus, the fourth Abbot of Cluny, we read as follows: "He was dear to God and to men. Many Catholics and honourable clerks, holy monks and reverend abbots, venerated him as a father; bishops treated him as a most dear brother; by emperors and empresses, by kings and princes of the world, he was called 'lord;' and he was honoured by pontiffs of the apostolic seat. The

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* De Utilitat. ex Advers. capiend. lib. iii. c. 2.

† Eckehard, Min. de Vita Notkeri, c. 29.

‡ Sulp. Sever. Dial. iii.

§ Hist. Mon. Villar. ap. Martene, Thes. Anec. iii.

great Cæsar Otho loved him from his heart. The wife of the same emperor, Adelaide, loved him with a sincere and devout charity. Their son, the Emperor Otho, loved him with humble devotion. Chuonradus, the noble and pacific brother of the same empress, loved him equally. The more they beheld his face, the more they increased in his love. What shall I say of the most noble Henry, Duke of Burgundy! What of Lambert, the most illustrious and noble count! What of William, what of Richard, the brave dukes of Aquitaine and Normandy! What of the Italian princes and marquisses!—Thus was he magnified and glorified by the Lord in the sight of kings, and before all the people *." Of Erluin, Abbot of Gemblou, it is recorded that "many who were high in secular power judged him worthy of their friendship, on account of the reverence of sanctity which shone forth in him †."

"One asks," says William of Jumiège, describing Boson, Abbot of Bec, "whether he became so illustrious, in consequence of his great ability for temporal affairs and for those of religion, or of his exemplary submission to the laws of the monastic life; for many powerful men, shining in the dignities of the world, or in those of the church, lived in intimate familiarity with him; respecting him as a father, fearing him as a preceptor, and loving him as a brother or a son ‡."

"Our Prior Nicholas," says a chronicler of the thirteenth century, "had such grace from the Lord that every one loved him. The count and countess always desired his company; so that when they walked forth they did not wish to have a band of jesters and actors to amuse them; but, sending for the prior, they made themselves glad with listening to his sweet talk §."

Conrad I., who, by the advice of St. Bernard, was elected Abbot of Fulda, was the perpetual companion of the Emperor Lothaire, on his journeys through France, Italy, Germany, Campania, and Apulia ||.

The influence of the monks was extended also, by

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* Bibliothec. Cluniacens.

† De Gestis Abb. Gemb. ap. Dacher. Spicileg. vi.

‡ Lib. viii. c. 24.

§ Hist. Monast. Viconiensis, ap. Martene, Vet. Script. vi.

|| Cornelii Monach. Breviar. Fuldense Historicum.

means of their occasional perambulations through the country, which they always took care to make subservient to the good of those with whom they came in contact, an end which was not difficult to obtain; "for," as Pope Pius II. said of St. Catherine of Sienna, "no one could approach them without departing better than when they went to them." Most beautiful is that passage in the life of Bourdoise, where he describes the mysterious and indelible impression he received in his youth on a journey, when, arriving where the roads of Laon and of Paris separate, he met at eight o'clock in the morning two friars of the order of St. Dominic, who seemed to him like angels, so heavenly was their discourse as they walked by his side. They soon parted; and he never saw them afterwards; but during that conversation they gave him an advice, of which he used to speak to his dearest friends with great reserve, as if he feared to reveal it; such a mysterious impression did it leave upon his soul*. These journeys were instrumental to the formation of that familiarity with the great which contributed so much to extend the pacific influence of the cloister.

Many Castellains had chambers in their castles, which they used to call the chambers of the Minors, so accustomed were they to receive friars. Of the close intimacy in which many monks and friars lived with princes, there are curious instances related †. John, Duke of Brittany, had brother Peter Lenet in his council, and Francis, Count de Montfort, had always with him another Minor. Henry VI. of England obtained permission to have four Minors always in his palace, and in 1441 many great men had similar permission granted to them ‡. Mathew de Bassio and his companions, who were the first to revive the ancient hood of St. Francis, and to return to the strict practice of his rule, being received into the palace of John, Duke of Camerino, whose wife was their great protectress, we read that every day they celebrated mass in the chapel of the palace; and that it was with such gravity and devotion, that all who assisted were elevated to contemplation. The palace itself was to them a desert, in which, remote from all tumult of secular affairs, they contemplated God: so carefully did they avoid the sight and conversation of the courtiers, that no one ever saw them, excepting at mass *.

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* Vie de Bourdoise, liv. i. 20.

† Annal. Min. v. 1281.

‡ Id. tom. xi.

The influence of such guests may be easily conceived. In general, when monks addressed themselves to the great, their object was to give them religious counsel or consolation. Thus the Abbot John sends a little book of prayers, compiled from the fathers, as a present to the widowed Empress Agnes, and addresses her in these terms in the prologue.

"Accept then, O pious soul, excellent exemplar of holy widowhood, the little work of flowers which you sought from me, in which you will find sweet words of celestial contemplation, which are to be read with reverence, and to be meditated on with due fear, lest perchance he who should approach lukewarm and indevout, might be condemned of temerity. For you must know that the reading of this book is especially for those who do not suffer their minds to be darkened by earthly concupiscence. But when these are read with tears and great devotion, then the mild reader tastes on the palate of his heart, the sweetness which was hidden within. It being so then let not the proud and fastidious mind presume to touch the secret and sublime words of the divine language, lest it should fall into error, for light cannot be seen when the eyes are blinded. But for you who converse well in this life of action, it is just that you should take here the wings of contemplation, and flying on high, draw from the fountain of supernal sweetness. St. John, the last of the servants of Christ, and the brethren who are with me, salute your beatitude in Christ, pious mother of the poor, and noble ornament of widows. Farewell †."

It is a curious fact, which ought not to escape observation, that science itself owes much to the influence arising from the monastic intercourse with the great. The learned geometricians of Spain and of all Europe, laughed at the project of Columbus, while a poor Franciscan friar, John Perezio de Marchina, guardian of the convent of Arabida, a few paces distant from the town of Palos de

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* Ann. Capucinorum, 1527.

† Ap. Pez. Thes. Anecdot. tom. iii. p. 111.

Moguet, alone judged otherwise, encouraged him, and gave him letters to the queen; and had it not been for this friar, and his friend, a Dominican, Diego Deza, confessor of the King of Castile, who recognizing the merit of the applicant, obtained from the king the three ships in 1491, Columbus would have been obliged to abandon his enterprize *. On his return, he took Franciscans with him, who were the first to announce the gospel in the new world. This John Perez de Marchina accompanied Columbus in his second voyage, and on landing in the island of Hispaniola, he constructed a hut, in which, after saying the first mass that new world ever witnessed, he placed the holy Eucharist. This was the first church of the West Indies, and the second he built in the town of St. Domingo, both of which Columbus, to show his love and gratitude to the Franciscans, afterwards rebuilt with polished stone in a sumptuous manner †.

Here one might speak of the prodigious exertions of the Dominicans in behalf of peace and mercy, while protecting the Indians, but our limits will not permit us to pursue this theme, which would lead us nearer to the manners of later ages. The choice of monks by princes, as their spiritual directors, was productive, no doubt, of great results. Thieri, King of France, had for confessor, Ausbert, Abbot of Fontenelle, in 683; Charles Martel had for confessor, Martin, a monk of Corby; Count Walbert had St. Bertin, of Sisthiu; Richard, Duke of Normandy, had the Abbot of St. Peter, of Chartres; the Emperor Otho III. confessed to St. Romuald; and the Empress Agnes had the blessed Peter Damian for spiritual director; Henry III. of England, had for his confessor, John of Darlington, a Dominican of great sanctity and erudition ‡. We must remember that the relation between kings and princes, in ages of faith, and their confessors, was not exactly what might be supposed, if we were only to judge from the conduct of some sceptical Catholics at the present day, who live only for themselves, without either praise or blame. "The honour St. Louis showed his confessors was such," say the Chronicles, "that when he used to be sitting in their presence, if any window or door happened to fly

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* Wadding, xv. Touron, iii. 24.

† Vol. xv.

‡ Touron, i. 4.

open or shut, by the force of the wind, he used to rise and shut it gently, or place it so, that it should make no more noise to disturb them *."

Some modern historians have the candour to acknowledge the immense moral benefit which the world derived from having kings thus in contact with the monastic action. "Witness," says Michelet, "Louis-le-debonnaire and Louis IX., educated by monks, living with monks, governed by monks: and were there ever men more profoundly impressed with a desire of performing all the duties of their state with a clear conscience? What profound justice characterized their actions!" "It may be asked," says St. Bonaventura, "why do monks and friars honour rich men more than poor, serving them more promptly in confessions and other things? God has care of all men alike, therefore we ought certainly to love all men alike, and seek with equal solicitude, to promote the salvation of rich and poor, according to their respective wants. If the poor man be better than the rich, we should love him more, and yet we must honour the rich more for four reasons. First, because God in this world has given preeminence to the rich and powerful; and therefore we conform to his ordination in honouring them so far as relates to this order. Secondly, because of the infirmity of the rich: who if they are not honoured, grow indignant, and so become more infirm and worse, and a burden to us and other poor. Whereas we ought not to be a scandal to the weak, and a cause of their becoming weaker still: but should rather provoke them to good. Thirdly, because a greater utility results from the correction of one rich man than of many poor; for a rich man's conversion is of advantage to many in several respects. Fourthly, since we receive more corporal support from the rich, it is but just that we should repay them spiritually. Besides, the affairs of the poor are more easily expedited, because they are not bound by so many ties, or involved in so many perplexities which require counsel oftener †."

In fine, the monasteries possessed the natural influ-

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* Chroniques de St. Denis ad 1256.

† S. Bonavent. Determinationes Questionum circa Regulam S. Francisci, c. 23.

ence of all great properties which brought with them powerful connections and honours. When abbots were princes of the empire, and peers of parliament, when abbeys had for their protectors and stewards such men as the Counts of Hapsburg, Rapperschwil, Werdenberg, and Toggenburg, who were bound by those offices to defend the abbey of Einsiedelin *, when even the superiors of mendicants, as those of the Franciscans, were grandees of Spain †, when kings, as Henry and Sancho, of Castille, were so affectionate to the same order, that the one surrounded the royal arms with the cord of St. Francis ‡, and the other desired that he might be buried in the royal chapel at Toledo, wearing the habit of a Franciscan §, it is clear that the pacific must have been also in a temporal sense, very influential men, enjoying a position in the state which gave them means of imparting a direction to the spirit of the whole community. Accordingly, their labours and plans were those of men conscious of their own power; but what could be more magnificent or more noble than their projects? Cluny, that immense confederation, demanded the freedom of ecclesiastical elections. Citeaux gave to the defence of Christendom that wondrous and sudden creation, the military orders. When was influence more gloriously employed? Truly it was well for the social order, and the happiness of the world, that the ignorant should be excited by the external display of power to respect men who entertained and realized such views, to whom the wise and learned were constantly repairing for advice in all their proceedings, whom theologians, jurisconsults, physicians, philosophers, historians, orators, poets, and professors of all noble arts were extolling as the most virtuous of the human race ||, and addressing in words like those of Plato to Æschylus.

—— χώρει,
Καὶ σῶζε πόλιν τὴν ὑμετέραν
Γνώμαις ἀγαθαῖς, καὶ παίδευσον
Τοὺς ἀνοήτους· πολλοὶ δ' εἰσίν— ¶.

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* Tschudi Einsiedlische Chronik.
† Annal. Min. tom. xvi. ‡ Id. tom. ix. 1407.
§ Id. v. || Pet. Sutorus de Vet. Carthus. lib. ii. t. iii. 2.
¶ Ranæ, 1525.

CHAPTER XIX.

Near upon the close of our sojourn in this house of blessed peace, it may seem late to ask now why such riches were bestowed on monasteries, since that is a question to which every thing we have seen and heard under its roof must have supplied a sufficient answer. Nevertheless, it may be well to return once more to the treasury, to cast a glance over the old charters and diplomas, with a view to this specific object; for there is much to learn from them; they will enable us, as it were, to hear the reply of the founders and benefactors, who can best explain their own motives; and the result will not prove irrelevant matter to insert in a history of these pacific institutions.

The Roman Pagan laws prohibited the bequest of property to communities, or to any sort of collegiate bodies, and allowed only of legacies to individuals. These laws were formerly abrogated by Constantine, but, in fact, the giving of estates to the Church had been a practice of the first Christians, from the time of the Apostles. "The Pagans," as an old Spanish writer observes, "spent their riches in erecting baths, colossæums, pyramids, arches, and those insane edifices which antiquity celebrated. Christians raised monasteries, hospitals, colleges, and cathedrals *."

"Gold," said Columbus, "is an excellent thing. With gold one can do every thing—can even cause souls to gain Paradise †." He alluded to such foundations, so rich were the returns to heaven from the cloister. Not riches, then, but the abuse of riches are a blemish to the Church, as John Polmar said, in his speech before the council of Basilea; and even the state, so far from suffering by the wealth of religious communities, as John Marianat seems inclined to grant, gains from them in every respect prodigiously. As for these institutions in particular, it is evident that if the monasteries had not been well endowed, their inhabitants could not have ful-

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* De Academiis et Doctis Viris Hispan. Narrat. Alfonsi Garsiæ Præf.

† Lett. to Ferd. and Isab. Navarette Hist. iii. 152.

filled their mission, in regard to the interests either of religion, of charity, or of learning; and in the middle ages, as at the present day in Spain, we may be sure that the wealth of the monasteries was not a subject of regret to the district in which they were placed, when every peasant knew what was the life of abstinence, which was led within their walls; while the poor had a right to profit by the endowments, either in receiving relief or in sharing the cells of the monks, if they chose, like them, to renounce the world *. We need not cite many instances to prove the liberality of kings, nobles, and people towards the religious orders in ages of faith. Its mode of communication was often singular. Clovis gave to John, Abbot of Reomans in Burgundy, as much land as he could ride round on his ass in one day: to St. Remi he gave as much as the holy man could ride round on his ass, while he took his meridien. "How long and how wide is the tract you give me?" asked St. Florent to Dagobert; who replied, "All that you can ride round on your little ass, while I am bathing and putting on my clothes." Louis-le-debonnaire built and repaired twenty-six monasteries, which are named by the anonymous author of his life †. During the government of William in Normandy seventeen monasteries of monks and six of nuns were built and sumptuously provided with all things necessary for the pompous celebration of divine worship every day ‡. Duke Richard built the abbeys of St. Peter and St. Ouen at Rouen, and another on the hill in honour of St. Michael. King Henry, the husband of Matilda, who built so many abbeys, insisted on constructing, with his own hands, the dormitory for the monks of Tours §. Orderic Vitalis says that the barons of Normandy imitated the pious liberality of their princes, in making holy foundations for the good of their souls. "There was no powerful man who would not have deemed himself worthy of derision and of contempt, if he did not entertain suitably in his domains, clerks or monks, to form the host of God ||." The same feeling is ascribed by a monk of Mount Cassino to Count Roger; for when he came in

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* Henningsen's Campaign.

† Vita et Actus Lud. Pii, Duchesne, ii.

‡ Orderic. Vit. lib. vii.

§ Will. of Jumiège, viii. 32.

|| Hist. Normand. lib. iii.

possession of all Sicily, we are told that he saw in one place "most grandiose palaces of Saracens, amongst which the church of St. Mary appeared like a cabin; and the count sighed that the palaces of the Saracens should be so high, and the court of the Virgin Mary so low. So he ordered it to be rebuilt on a noble scale, giving much money to purchase marble and cut stones *." I repeat it, such details might be interminable. Who could enumerate all the noblemen who gave towns, and forests, and chases, and mills, and rivers, and riches, and themselves and their sons to the monasteries and churches of God in the diocese of Salzburg alone †? The donations of one individual would often be too multiplied for enumeration here. Sir William Vavasour of Haslewood, in the thirteenth century, besides legacies, not only to the poor of the district and to his friends, leaves to the Friars Preachers of York five marks; to the Friars Minor of the same city five marks; to the Augustinians of the same city forty shillings; to the monks of Mount Carmel forty; to the Preaching Friars of Beverley forty; to the Friars Minor of Pontefract six marks; to the Friars Minor of Beverley forty shillings; to the Dominicans of Scarborough forty; to the Franciscans of the same place forty; to the Dominicans of Yarm forty; to the Franciscans of Richmond forty; to the Franciscans of Doncaster forty; to the Augustinians of Tykhill forty; to the nuns of Sinningthwaite ten marks; to the nuns of Apleton, Munketon, St. Clement's York, Arthington, Essbold, Kirkeleys, Wilberforce, each convent forty shillings. "Giroie de Courserault," says William of Jumiège, "possessed nobility, lands, and riches, and did not the less love God, who gave him all these goods; honouring His ministers, and building six churches ‡." Rudolph, Count of Raperschwil, in the twelfth century, a devout and valiant knight, has immortalized his name in the monastic records, not only by his defending the rights of the abbeys of Einsiedelin and of St. Gall, but also by his immense donations to those of Fax, Pfeffers, Ruti, St. Gall, Bollingen, and Warmspach. In fact, many families owe their earliest titles to such acts. The Abbé Lebeuf says, in his history of the diocese of Paris, "That the

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* L'Ystoire de li Normant, vi. 23.

† Germania Sacra, ii. 13.

‡ Lib. iii.

names of the ancient lords of Chauvry have been chiefly transmitted to us by means of their donations to some neighbouring monastery *."

The gifts of these ancient benefactors, even when of little intrinsic value, indicate no less an affectionate attention to the peculiar wants of the monks. Thus, Hugues, Viscount of Meaux, gives to one monastery a part of the dead wood in the forest which belongs to his castle. Philip, Count of Flanders, gives to the monks of Clairvaux, two sacks of dry peas every year. William of Breteuil gives to the monks of Ouche one hundred sous, to purchase fish every year at the beginning of Lent †. "Every where, I remark," says Monteil, "that in rich and pious houses, the best dish on the table is sent to the Capuchins ‡." We often hear of the donations of the barons on setting out for Palestine, which testified how much they valued the monks on their estates; but we should be reminded also, that the same disposition urged them to perform every good work, and in particular to promote the freedom of the people. Thus, Philip, Count of Flanders, on this occasion, while making donations to the monks of Clairvaux, with the same pen was confirming the customs of the citizens of Arras; as if he felt that he could not confer favours on the monks without also extending them to the people, to whom they were such true and constant friends.

The accounts of expenditure made by the provosts of municipalities in the middle age, evince the same generosity to monks. Thus in the reign of Philippe-Auguste, in the records of Orleans, we read of a certain sum having been given to the monks, and then conjoined with this notice, there is an entry made of the money which was laid out in repairing the city walls; as if the magistrates wished to indicate their solicitude to defend the citizens by prayers as well as arms. In 1308, during a scarcity in Dublin, the prior of Christ-Church, desiring to purchase corn, sent to John le Decer, Mayor of the city, a pledge of plate, to the value of forty pounds, which that magistrate immediately returned, with a present of twenty barrels of corn. In 1283 the priory of the Blessed Trinity in that city, having been destroyed

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* Tom. iv.

† Order. Vit. v.

‡ Hist. des Français, viii. 250.

by fire, along with the street in which it stood, the citizens agreed to make a collection for repairing it, before they would rebuild their own dwellings, which had suffered in the conflagration. From the thirteenth century, when they arose, the Mendicant orders experienced that the old liberality in this respect was not exhausted. What generosity and zeal were evinced by the inhabitants of the plain of Spoleto, Perugia, Foligno, and Assisi to St. Francis and his brethren coming to them with their horses, mules, and waggons loaded with bread, wine, oil, cheese, flesh, fowl, eggs, butter, poultry, linen, cloth, and whatever they could want! Then one might have seen knights and other lords spreading their own mantles on the ground, to honour these poor of Jesus Christ. Every landlord desired to erect a convent for them on his estate: princes expended their treasures in multiplying them. The Empress Ann, wife of the Emperor Matthias, founded four convents of Capuchins, at Steyer, Regensburg, Budweiss, and Vienna *. How far, it may be asked, were the religious orders active in promoting this spirit throughout the world? Modern writers would induce us to believe, that the monks were ever craving after donations, and that liberality to their order cancelled every crime in their judgment of the donor's character; but they know little of the middle ages who suffer themselves to be imposed upon by such representations.

The monastic spirit in this respect breathes in the peaceful but magnanimous reply of Guitmond, monk of the abbey of the Cross at St. Leufroy to William the Conqueror, on being invited by him to repair to England for promotion. "I leave the spoils of England," said the monk, "to the lovers of this world; I prefer the free poverty of Jesus Christ, which St. Anthony and St. Benedict embraced, to all the riches of Crœsus and Sardanapalus, which, after a miserable death, they left to their enemies †." "You have built monasteries," says St. Jerome to a rich nobleman, "and a great number of the saints are supported by you in the islands of Dalmatia; but you would do better if you yourself would live holy among the holy. Sancti estote quoniam ego Sanc-

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* Heumann, De re Diplom. iii. p. 380.

† Hist. d'Evreux.

tus sum," said the Lord *. So, while relating the desire of King Dagobert to enrich and adorn the church of St. Denis, the monks of that abbey, in their chronicle, fail not to expose the crimes of his subsequent life, saying, that he changed his graces and his virtues into vices †. Of Clotaire III. they say, "Of this king we have more of evil than of good to relate: he was, indeed, to a certain degree, devout to the churches of the saints; but, nevertheless, he had so many vices, that they extinguished his virtues, if there were any in him. He was a despiser of women, and history does not record that his life was worthy of praise or of memory, but many authors consign him to damnation ‡." A late editor of these chronicles complains that the monks who compiled them treat Brunehaut too severely. They record, however, that she founded and enriched many churches and abbeys, but they style her, "femme exercitée et usée en la mort de ses prochains §." Wadding the Franciscan gives the same lesson to the great, when speaking of the sumptuous church of his order at Rimini, the front of which is formed of cut stones of wondrous magnitude, without any cement or ligature. "The chief founder of this convent," he says, "was Sigismund Malatesta, a man to be commended more for the gifts of body than of mind, eminent for military glory, rare eloquence, and corporal strength, but of manners and conversation little Christian. He adorned the church with figures of gentile fables and profane emblems, placing in it his own mausoleum, on which he inscribed a Pagan epitaph ||." St. Francis, indeed, counsels his friars to ask alms confidently, and to feel no shame, not on the ground urged by Telemachus,

αἰδὼς δ' οὐκ ἀγαθὴ κεχρημένῳ ἀνδρὶ παρεῖναι ¶.

But "because our Lord made Himself poor for us:" but how little the love of property could interfere with the peace of his order may be gathered from the fact that the Minors cannot use any thing of right—all their convents, furniture, books, and utensils belonging of right to the Pope, the brethren only using them as his guests, having

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* Epist. xcii.

† Lib. v. c. xi.

‡ V. 23.

§ iv. 21.

|| Annal. Minor. tom. v. 1292.

¶ xvii. 347.

only the usufruct and not the possession *. "A thousand times I have wondered," says Stephen Pasquier, "why Guillaume de Sainct Amour, and after him John of Meun, in his romance of the Rose, should abhor the Mendicant orders for their vow of poverty; for the mendicity of which they make profession is not a mendicity like that of strong vagabonds, who, that they may remain always useless to the republic, go about begging from house to house. On the contrary, these poor people, daily devoted to the service of God and to preaching, leave it to the devotion of worthy people to give them alms, according as they think they merit them, and there is no greater way to ruin devotion than by having great wealth †." The absence of any thing like intrigue, too, in acquiring even the usufruct is most conspicuous in their rule and practice. "If a sum," says one of their expositors, "be left to any one on condition of his paying annually a part to some convent of Minors, the brethren cannot accept the legacy, nor claim the payment; and if the brethren should say to the heirs, notwithstanding our renunciation, 'if you give this sum voluntarily as alms, we will accept it,' they cannot afterwards receive it ‡."

When brother John left his ox and his plough to become a follower of St. Francis, the holy founder obliged him to give them to his relations §. After St. Bernardine of Sienna had preached, when the people used to come forward and present him with money to build convents, he would never either look at it or touch it; he used to pass on ||. The Carthusian monastery of Laval-Sainte, in the canton of Freyburg, founded in 1295 by Girard I. Seigneur de Charmey, was endowed by Girard II., who had no children, with all his property, paternal and maternal, in the parish of Charmey; but afterwards, his second wife, Alexie, bringing him a daughter, he addressed the monks in these terms: "Girard Seigneur of Charmey salutes his dearly beloved, the prior and monks of the holy valley. May it please you, my beloved fathers, to have pity upon me and upon my little daughter, whom I have obtained from God by

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* Louis de Paris, Expos. de la Règle des FF. Min. 6.

† Recherches de la France, iii. 19.

‡ Id. chap. 6.

§ Diego de Navarre, i. 29.

|| An. Minor. x.

your prayers, and to grant to her, under the condition of the Salic law observed in this country, some portion of the property which my father and myself have before given you by irrevocable donation; and God will recompense you in eternity." The answer was as follows. "In consequence, we, William, humble prior, and the other monks of the Val-Sainte of the order of Carthusians, having seen the request above written, by permission of the reverend Lord Bishop of Lausanne, we grant to Girard, Seigneur de Charmey, son of our blessed founder, of happy memory, and to Jeannette, his very dear and only daughter, the third part of all the property which Girard and his father had before devoutly given both in forests and in lands." This daughter married Francis Magnym of Aubonne, but as she died without children, all the property was restored to the Carthusians in 1360.

But it is time that we should meet the question respecting the motive of those who made such donations to the monks. Nothing can be more mystically high, and at the same time more solid and faithful to the spirit of the book of God than the arguments employed by the founders and benefactors of monasteries in the middle ages when explaining their intention in the prefaces to their charters of foundation, privilege, and endowment *. Many motives are alleged in the diplomas to religious houses as having influenced their authors. The first and most general cause which determined them, seems to have been a profound sense of the sanctity of the community to which they made these grants. Thus one diploma begins, "I, Higmar, in the name of God, considering the purity of the innocence of the Abbot Olger and of his monks in the service of God, and considering that by serving them I can please God, give such and such lands to them." The chronicles, moreover, are before us to corroborate such statements. "At this time," says the chronicle of Melrose Abbey, "many rich men came to us. The king of the land, Alexander, was buried in the Church; and many others also, through veneration for the sanctity of the abbot, demanding eagerly that he would accept whatever he pleased of their goods: of which offer he would rarely avail himself; yet

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* Vide Baluze, Miscellan. Diplom. et Epist. tom. iii. passim.

sometimes he would accept a few of their cows that they might minister milk to the needy who came to them. He had two cows belonging to the monastery to furnish himself and a companion with milk: but the reason why the rich men of the earth came to him was, that they might confess their sins to him and receive his holy benediction, which they believed would greatly profit them [*]." "Duke Robert," says a monk of Mount Cassino, "so loved the Abbot Desiderius, that he revered him as if he were St. Benedict, and he did not wish to be without the presence of the abbot—who was no less loved by the duchess; and the duke gave rich palls to the monastery, and gold, and silver, and cloth for the monks, and fish for their provision, and on solemn feasts sent them vessels of gold and silver [†]." "Father Dosithée, relating that the alms of the citizens of Manzere and of the peasants in the neighbourhood to the barefooted Carmelites were so abundant, that sometimes the monks felt bound to refuse them, adds, "This teaches us that a great exactitude in the fulfilment of duties moves seculars much more than all the other means which human prudence could suggest [‡]." Stephen Pasquier, who was advocate for the university of Paris against the Jesuits when the latter sought to be incorporated in it, furnishes a striking instance; for he says, writing to a friend, "It would be hard to tell you how they increase from day to day, and how the troubles have contributed to this; for having by their ceremonies brought reformation into the ecclesiastical order, and being vowed to maintain the authority of the holy see against the Calvinists, those who are frank catholics, seeing that from their shop religion and erudition both come forth, have given them great alms to found seminaries [§]." The holy solemnity of the divine offices in monasteries no doubt induced many to be generous to them. Thus in the annals of Corby, at the date of 1019, we read, "The festival of St. Vitus was splendidly celebrated, and great alms were collected: the very beggars were liberal [*]." Free men, with their wives and children, used, out of devotion, voluntarily, by solemn acts, to make themselves serfs of abbeys in which were eminent saints; for whose sakes avowedly they made this extraordinary offering. Thus, in 1039, Reinald, a free man, having been nourished from a boy in the Abbey of the Holy Trinity at Vendome, and having gained all that he possessed under its dominion, offered to God himself, choosing rather to be for ever its servant than free in the world, and firmly believing that to serve God is to reign; which act he fulfilled according to form, placing the cord of the abbey bell round his neck, to signify that he would be always ready to answer that call. Many similar acts are found in monastic documents [†].

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[*] Chronica de Mailros, Rer. Anglic. Script. i.

[†] L'Ystoire de li Normant, lib. viii. 35.

[‡] Vie de St. Jean de la Croix, liv. ii.

[§] Lettres de Pasquier, liv. iv. 24.

Again, donations often followed from men having heard the sermons of the monks: they thought nothing afterwards too great or too good for them. During a certain feast St. Francis preached at Monte Feltro standing upon a wall. His theme was the virtue of endurance; and the Seigneur Orlando, Count of Chiusi, was so moved at the sermon, that he went to the holy man and immediately offered to give him the mountain of Alvernia, which was his property, in order that the saint might live there in retirement and contemplation. The holy man accepted the offer, and sending there two of his disciples, they built a chapel and a monastery, in which they established themselves, being welcomed to that solitude, as we are told, by the cries of the birds who came forth as if to greet them [‡]. Generally, after the sermons of St. Francis, the people of the town or village went about and offered to build a convent for his friars on their grounds. Preaching at Poggibonzi, and being favourably heard by the people, he asked them to build a house for the brethren, which they did near the church of St. Mary. Marianus saw the table containing the gift in these words, "Concedimus nos—cuidam Fratri Francisco de Assisio qui vocatur Sanctus ab omnibus." The town then stood on a high mountain, but being besieged by the Florentines when it sided with the

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[*] Ap. Leibnitz, Script. Bruns. iii.

[†] Pasquier, Recherches de la France, iii. 41.

[‡] Les Chroniques des FF. Min. liv. ii. c. 37.

Gibellines, it was destroyed, and rebuilt in the valley; the convent remaining in solitude on the heights [*]. In later times the same cause operated; for we read that Lorenzo de Medicis built a monastery near Florence for brother Mariano, of the order of St. Augustin, merely because he was an admirable preacher [†]. Personal intimacy with the superiors of religious houses often led to donations. This was the case at the Abbey of Villers in the seventh century; for, in consequence of the great friendship which the nobles bore to the Abbot Charles, many vineyards on the Rhine and the Moselle were given to the abbey. "This is to be admired in him," says the chronicle, "that he should have enjoyed such incomparable favour with all, when he was so tenacious a preserver of the things of his abbey, and always desirous of acquiring more; for he obtained great additions to the property of the abbey, and during his rule not a hide of land nor a cart was ever sold, for he judged it to be a sacrilege if any thing belonging to the church was alienated from it. By the grace of God he kept the house free from all debts, and was able to give as much as 600 marcs to other churches; yet the rich gave him largely, while he had always closed hands for soldiers and tyrants, and a purse ever open for the poor and desolate [‡]." Indeed, the well-known charity of the monks for the poor was another prolific source of wealth to their communities. A charter of Louis-le-debonnaire to the Abbey of St. Medard at Soissons begins thus: "Although the offerings of the faithful to venerable places, where the bodies of saints repose, cannot in any way serve to increase the glory of the blessed, it is nevertheless certain, that the said offerings conduce greatly to the salvation of those who make them in memory of the martyrs; because, by means of such gifts, the poor and indigent are nourished, who would not otherwise be able to live [§]." So close was the connection between monastic charity and monastic wealth, that Cæsar of Heisterbach lays down a general rule for all monks, saying, "If you expel brother Date from the monastery, you cannot prevail on brother Dabitur to remain [||]."

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[*] Ann. Min. an. 1213. [†] Machiavel, Hist. of Florence, viii.

[‡] Hist. Mon. Vill. ap. Martene, Thes. Anec. iii.

[§] Martin, Hist. de Soissons, i. 307. [||] Illust. Mirac. lib. iv. 69.

In the eleventh century, tithes were generally given to monasteries, "in usus pauperum et peregrinorum;" but there are examples in a much earlier age, some of which, produced by Mabillon, prove that the care of the people, even in the administration of the sacraments, devolved frequently upon monasteries. In the time of Louis-le-debonnaire, some lay-men desired to redeem the tithes, but the emperor forbad them, by the third capitulary *. Petrus Damianus uses these words: "In order that they might furnish more copious provision to the poor, tithes were given to monasteries, not only of cattle, but of fowl and eggs †."

But the secret of munificence to religious houses lay often deeper still than might be inferred from any of the considerations hitherto alleged. Lucas Tudensis relates, that, in the time of Alphonso III., when Cordova was occupied by the Saracens, the Mahometan king one day taking repose in a beauteous field, sweet with roses and trees of various kinds, one of his soldiers said to him, "O how beautiful, sweet, and delightful, would be this world, if men were not to die ‡!" This reflection throws light upon the intention of Christians in ages of faith, when they endowed monasteries so abundantly; for one of the chief motives which actuated them in doing so,—which, indeed, was never separated from any other inducement,—was the desire to secure for themselves a permanent possession, and a durable felicity. "My lord," said St. Eloy one day to Dagobert, desiring to found in the Limousin the abbey of Solignac, "grant me this gift, in order that I may make a ladder by which you and I may mount to the heavenly kingdom." Let us hear a charter from the manuscripts of the abbey of St. Martin at Tours. "Multifariously does the multiplied mercy of the omnipotent God wish to honour the human race, in deigning to grant to every faithful mortal, that, from his own temporal goods, he may be able to purchase and provide a celestial kingdom, and, in exchange for frail and transitory things, receive from the Lord an eternal recompense: for so declares the angelic voice,—'Fiducia magna erit coram summo Domino, eleemosyna omnibus facientibus eam;' and the Lord himself pro-

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* Præf. in 4 sæc. cap. 7.

† Opuscul. xxxiii. c. 7.

‡ Rod. Santii Hist. Hispan. p. iii. c. 17.

mised in his Gospel, 'Quicumque alicui aliquid dederit, vel calicem aquæ frigidæ tantum in nomine meo amen dico vobis non perdet mercedem suam;' and again He says, 'Date in præsenti quæ possidetis, et dabitur vobis in futuro præmium et regnum æternæ beatitudinis;' and again, 'Quicumque dimiserit et pauperibus erogaverit agros, domos, vineas et mancipia propter me, centuplum accipiet et vitam æternam possidebit.' Therefore, in the name of the high Saviour our Lord, I Garnegaud, considering with a devout mind this great and ineffable reward of Almighty God, and knowing that what the Lord hath promised is most certain and firm, and meditating daily within myself the measure of human fragility, how no one knows the day and hour of his death, and fearing at the same time the day of last judgment and the Judge who is to examine my sins, and remembering the piety of our Lord, saying, 'Date eleemosynam, et omnia munda fient vobis,' therefore that I may be a partaker of eternal happiness, I give and grant to this monastery such and such lands *."

The charter of the foundation of the abbeys of St. Stephen and of the Holy Trinity, at Caen, expresses a similar motive: for the words are, "Whoever makes a donation of any thing to God, or for the love of God, does not alienate it from himself, but rather preserves it for himself, and keeps it to be multiplied at a future time, with hope of eternal life. Thus acteth the benign liberality of the Creator towards his creatures: and, though He hath no need of our goods, since to Him appertains the earth with all that it contains, yet He requires to be honoured by our means and substance, and that the sacrifice of praise should be offered to Him for our salvation †."

Amongst the Norman princes who accompanied Roger to Sicily was Bartholomew de Lucy, Count of Montecava. He speaks as follows, in a diploma, dated 1193, to the Cistercian monastery of St. Maria Roccæamatoris, near Messina: "The Creator of all the world inspiring, I have considered that temporal goods have been committed to me in this life, as to every other mortal man, in order that by them, charitably and discreetly dispensed in divine

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* Bernier, Hist. de Blois Preuves, i.

† De Bourgueville, Les Recherches et Antiquitez de Normandie, 21. 1.

worship, and in assisting the servants of God and the poor, and in salutary works of mercy, I might acquire eternal possessions and the joys of celestial life, prepared for the faithful of Christ from the beginning of the world by the providence of his goodness; and because, from the liberal goodness of God it is, that His own gifts which He commits temporally, afterwards from the hands of His creatures doing well He rewards eternally; and from the terrestrial Church, if any thing be offered to Himself and to His ministers, He assumes afterwards to Himself; moved by this consideration, I, Bartholomew de Lucy, to the honour of the eternal God, and under the name of the most glorious Virgin Mary, have founded an honourable mansion of the Cistercian order, with the intention that lauds, sacrifices, and pious ecclesiastical exercises, may be for ever offered to Jesus Christ, Son of the living God, day and night; and that it may conduce to the support and comfort of His servants, of pilgrims, of sick and weary people, and of all the miserable *."

The donation of Arichis the Longobard, Duke of Beneventum, in the year 758, to the monastery of St. Sophia, expresses the same intention. Thus it begins: "In the name of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ,—riches began to increase to me, while divers kinds of gems and metals abounded to me, and many other treasures, whatever Indus or vain Crete bears, whatever soft Arabia or black-skinned Ethiopia furnish. Considering then all these things, from the beginning to the end of the world, what are past and present, and what will be in future, I deemed all things under the sun to be vanity, of which the essence is birth, experience, labour, and death. 'Nil ergo rerum copia proderit nisi Deo possessori oblata.' We remember our fifty years past; scarcely can we expect sixty years: for, if some have reached a hundred years, they may ardently desire the night of repose; if some possessed the sweets of riches for a season, now they weep to feel bitter poverty. The world, contracted and bankrupt, flies from the dying. By the Saviour's voice heaven and earth are said to pass away. The life of mortals is like a flower which withers, and like a lamp which is extinguished by the passing wind. Nothing is more useful—'nihil utilius,' nothing more profitable,

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* Sicilia Sacra, ii. 1287.

than to remember the future life; and, by anticipation, to offer to the Lord our goods, that we may have true and durable riches, and blessed peace, in eternal life in heaven. Moreover, for me did the Lord of Majesty and King of Angels become poor, descending upon this earth clothed in a servile form; and for me did He suffer. Therefore, I, who am a fragile creature, the illustrious Prince Arichis, meditating on the fate of frail life, and desiring to gain the riches of immortality, have consecrated these walls under the name of thy holy wisdom, O Christ, who art the true wisdom of the Lord *."

Both Scriptures, new and ancient, propose the mark at which these founders aimed, whether they held unceasingly their view intent upon such glorious ends, or sought to realize some temporal object which was not at variance with them. Aystulphus merely wishes to obey an apostolic precept, when, in 753, he grants a privilege to the monastery of Nonantulo; for in that he says, "What else means the admonition to provide good things both before God and also before men, but that we should love all men, and assist venerable places and wise men with our riches †?" Monasteries being deemed a source of honour to the state, all true lovers of their country wished to favour them. Aristippus remarked that the Athenian people nourished Socrates, enabling him to live splendidly; and, partly from a similar motive, monks, as true philosophers, were now nourished ‡.

Again, what will surprise some readers, men gave to monks sometimes as to the poor, knowing that they were really in want of support. "We are reduced to such distress," says Lupus, Abbot of Ferrers, "that this year we have scarcely corn for two months: our servants are almost naked, and our brethren are mostly clothed in rags; we are obliged to diminish our hospitality to the poor." So writes this illustrious abbot to Hincmar, Archbishop of Rheims §. In another letter he says to him, "It is not that we lament being deprived of heaps of gold and silver, and other precious things; but that we want the necessaries of life, such as food and raiment ||." In a letter to Charles the Bald he says,

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* Italia Sacra, tom. viii. 26.

† Id. i. 86.

‡ Cardan de Consolatione, ii.

§ Lupi Epist. xlii.

|| Epist. xliv.

"During the last four years, since I have been elected by seventy-two monks to preside over them, we suffer incredible want *." In another letter to Charles, remonstrating on his cruelty in retaining possession of what belonged to the monastery, he says, "Do not suppose that they jest; for our old men declare they speak from long experience, and from what was delivered to them when they were boys, when they say, that whoever inflicts any great injury on our monastery, unless he repent quickly, is sure to incur some great peril, either of health or of life †." It was not marvellous that such appeals should have been answered by a society that had faith. In 1218, the monks of Monte Sereno often wanted bread, and sometimes they went without any food ‡. The Carthusians of Paris, commemorating as one of their benefactors Peter Travet, a citizen of Lagny in the reign of King Charles V., record that he supplied the necessities of thirty monks of the house. In fact, the gift of a basket of provisions would be recorded in the diary of a religious house as a great present. There was a poor convent of Capuchins in Romagna, say the annals of that order, far remote from any town. During a great fall of snow, all the ways being nearly impassable, lo! one evening the gate bell was rung, and a youth appeared with a basket of bread, which he gave to the porter. The youth refused to tell his name; and when the porter begged him to take a night's lodging, as the snow was still falling and the night drawing on fast, he declined; and while the porter went to inform Denis of Spoleto, who was then vicar in absence of the guardian, the youth departed, nor could they see the prints of his feet on the snow, so that the good father believed it was an angel §. The greatest monasteries were sometimes reduced to the same distress. In his charter to the abbey of St. Maximin at Treves, Dagobert assigns as his motive, "the excessive penury of the monks serving Christ there, on account of the ravages of Pagans and unbelieving Christians." Peter, Bishop of Verona, being surprised at the poverty of the monks of St. Gall when he visited that abbey, desired them, on his going away, to send after

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* Id. lxv.

† Id. liii.

‡ Chronic. Montis Sereni, ap. Menckenii Script. Rer. Germ. ii.

§ Annal. Capucinorum ad an. 1576.

him to Verona six brethren, two by two, and by three different ways. "Let them come to me only two at a time, and, bending the thumb on the hand, let them ask alms. Then I will, as usual, lead them into my private chamber, where I will tie gold in bandages round their legs, and then send them away. So let them return to you as they came." Thus it was done, and so a large quantity of gold was brought to our abbey from Verona *. Sometimes it was an aspect of total desolation which excited generosity. Herbert, Count of Champagne and of Brie, had been moved at the sight of the ruins of the monastery of Lagny, formerly a nursery of saints, having been founded by St. Fursy, which lay on his road when he used to come to Paris. It had been reduced to this state by the Normans. He applied to King Robert, who granted him the place, and then restored the monastery, causing a Monk Herbert, disciple of the famous Gerbert, to be made abbot. Count Stephen, having obtained from the same king confirmation of this establishment, invited the Archbishop of Rheims, and the bishops of Soissons and of Terouenne, to assist at the solemn dedication of the new church, by Sevin, Archbishop of Sens; and, at his entreaty, these bishops brought holy relics to enrich it. King Robert and the Duke of Burgundy assisted on this grand occasion, the king following the procession bare-footed †. But let us look at other charters; for the reasons which called for liberality were many.

Thibaud, Count of Blois, in a diploma of the year 1142, to an abbey of Cistercians, states his motive for giving it certain lands and boundaries to be a wish to promote its peace. "Since I know," he says, "that quiet is useful and necessary to the monastic life, I have determined upon extending the boundaries of that monastery, and marking them with certain signs, lest the monks of that house should be in the least prevented from serving God in peace, or disquieted by the tumults of secular men ‡."

Sometimes donations were made through desire of delivering a friend from danger by means of the monastic

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* Eckehard, Minim. de Vita Notkeri.

† Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, xv.

‡ Bernier, Hist. de Blois, Preuves, 20.

prayers. Thus when the news of the deposition of Louis-le-debonnaire came to Brittany, Nominœ, his general there, evinced his affection by going immediately to the monastery of Convoïon, and giving great possessions to the monks, specifying that they were to pray to God for the emperor's deliverance *. At other times there was a ratification of ancient grants to monasteries through gratitude to the monks for favours that had been received from them. Thus one charter, of the year 1226, begins, "I, Jane, by the grace of God, Countess of Flanders, make known, that when my lord and husband, Count Ferrandus, was captured in open war, the abbot and convent of St. Vedast, at Arras, to redeem him, through love, and by no law or violence compelled, gave assistance to me out of the goods of their church mercifully and benignly. I wish, therefore, that the aid from the abbot and convent to redeem my husband, so liberally extended, may not be to the prejudice of the charters which they have received from me and my ancestors †." Gratitude to God actuated many founders and benefactors. The annals of Corby relate, that in 1303, Helena Vechert, for the happy return of her only son from the Holy Land, ordered the church in Luchtringen to be repaired: and again, that, in 1094, Herman de Sichelsten sent three fat oxen to the abbey on the recovery of his son, granted to the prayers of the monks ‡.

Men also gave to monasteries because there they knew that their donations would be well employed and multiplied, as at that Dominican convent in Cesena, where the slice of pork in sculpture attested what great things might be done with a widow's mite and good men's prayers §. Naturally they presented libraries and treasures of art to monasteries rather than to presbyteries, for the very substantial reason that in the former there was much greater probability that there would be always some persons competent and willing to make use of them. Thus the inducements to evince liberality to monasteries were many, but the main object, as we find expressed in the ancient diplomas, was to please God, to

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* Lobineau, Hist. de Bret. i.

† Ap. Martene, Vet. Script. tom. i. p. 1205.

‡ Ap. Leibnitz, Script. Bruns. iii.

§ Leand. Albert, Descript. Ital. 460.

avert his anger by means of holy prayers and sacrifice, and to give form to the wishes of a pious heart. So we read of Henry, Duke of Saxony, in 1191, the husband of Matilda of England, and father of the emperor Otho IV., that his generosity to monks was the consequence of his becoming convinced of the vanity of all things but the desire of pleasing heaven. "Seeing that with all his efforts," says the chronicle, "he could not bend the emperor to benevolence, and desiring to please the celestial king, he applied himself to amplify the house of the Lord, and especially the monastery of St. John the Baptist and St. Blaze, which he constructed with great pains, and enriched with costly images and works of gold and marble; and though labouring under severe infirmity, which would have prostrated any other man, he spared not his own person. He ordered, also, the ancient writings of chronicles to be collected, and written out, and recited, and in this occupation he often passed the whole night without sleep *."

Odelirius, counsellor of Roger, Earl of Shrewsbury, concludes his eulogium on monasteries, in the year 1083, with these words of admonition: "While you can, therefore, O glorious Earl, I exhort you to construct for God a monastic fortress, that the soldiers of Christ may there combat perpetually against the devil in favour of your soul. Behold here on the river Mole is a house which you have lately given me. I have already begun to build a church of stone near it in pursuance of a vow which I made last year at Rome before St. Peter's altar. I offer it with joy, as well as all that I possess, to the Lord. Rise up then, and begin the work of God manfully. You will not want fellow-labourers. As soon as the first stone shall be laid, I will offer fifteen pounds sterling. I will give, besides, my own person, my son Benedict, and all that I possess, provided that under the patronage of the monks the half may pass to my son Evrard. Orderic, my eldest son, has been educated under a liberal monk, and I have procured for him an asylum in the Abbey of Ouches. Thus for the love of our Redeemer I have parted from my eldest son, and sent him beyond the seas, that as a voluntary exile he may contend for the

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* Chronicon Stederburgense, ap. Leibnitz, Script. Brunsv. i.

celestial King*." Similarly the motive of Dagobert, expressed in his charter to the Abbey of St. Maximinus, at Treves, is the desire that there may be a continual remembrance of him and of his parents in the holy prayers of the said monastery.

Such, then, in general are the considerations which we find expressed in the ancient charters and diplomas as having influenced men when they gave to monasteries their riches, their dearest treasures, and themselves. But there remains still unnoticed a powerful motive which actuated many thoughtful and acute lovers of the great Christian family in ages of faith to found and endow monasteries, the consideration of which will bring us back more immediately to the point of view from which we set out in this examination of their history; for it is certain that much of this zeal in their favour arose from the habit of regarding them as strictly institutions of peace, calculated to extend that inestimable gift of God to their neighbourhood, to their country, and to the human race.

In developing the justice of this observation it would be impossible to neglect remarking, in the first place, that they were endowed with a view to the attainment of that primal and true Christian peace which is wholly spiritual, belonging to the soul, either in connection with the body during the present life, or separated from it in the intermediate state, when it is purified from all that could disturb the joy of heaven. Of their efficacy in regard to the attainment of spiritual peace on earth, we have an affecting example, which will show that even the mere knowledge of there being such pacific communities existing could tranquillize the minds of sufferers, and appease their troubled state. Such is the letter of the Empress Cunegund, widow of St. Henry, to the convent which she had founded in Hess, beginning, "I, Cunegund, by divine dispensation, alone in name empress, to her beloved congregation in Confugia, whatever belongs to just love;" for she says, "I think I should bear more easily the load of my own adversity if I should see your affairs safe and prosperous. For although my mind is shaken on all sides by the flood of cares, yet the anchor of your remembrance is not loosened from the depths of my heart; and though you are far removed from my eyes, yet you are never absent from my mind. Who shall separate us from the charity of Christ? Shall grief or distance? If the use of our lost riches were restored to us, our will should be manifested by our deeds [*]." But it was for peace after death that so many hands were raised in supplication before signing the charters that are now before us. The requiem æternam was on the lips while the fingers held the pen. However insecure in some instances might be the hopes of those who made these foundations, their thoughts were of the soul—of the soul's eternal rest. "Pie Jesu, Domine," they said from the bottom of their hearts; "dona eis requiem. Amen."

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* Orderic. Vit. lib. v.

Thus our poet, with eyes intent upon the realities of history, represents King Henry V. endeavouring to tranquillize his mind before the battle of Agincourt, by recalling to it the foundations which he had made in England of the Carthusian monastery of Bethlehem and the adjoining monastery of Sion, which he had founded to compensate for the fault of his father in compassing the crown.

> "Five hundred poor I have in yearly pay,
> Who twice a day their wither'd hands hold up
> Toward heaven, to pardon blood; and I have built
> Two chantries, where the sad and solemn priests
> Sing still for Richard's soul. More will I do:
> Though all that I can do is nothing worth,
> Since that my penitence comes after all,
> Imploring pardon [†]."

Of citing historical and diplomatic testimonies of course there might be no end. Count Joseph Erzterhazi, founding a monastery of Camaldolese on his estates in Hungary, declares that he does so to honour God, to benefit his country, and for the good of his own soul. I the more willingly select this instance, because nothing can be more affecting than his devout letter in 1747 to Ladislaus Rodossany, the superior of these hermits, in which he speaks of his own approaching death, and of the consoling peace which he derives from having established hermits of Camaldoli in Hungary *. But let us read some of the charters, for they are deeply affecting, and capable of awakening the most thoughtless men to a remembrance that the dead need prayer.

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[*] Heumann, De Re Diplomatica, iii. p. 152.

[†] Hen. V. iv.

"I, Roger, Count of Calabria and of Sicily, for the love of God and the remedy of my soul, and for the soul's sake of Robert Guiscard, my brother, the glorious Duke of Apulia and Calabria, have wished to dedicate the church of the desert in the territory of Squillacum, which I have given to the blessed Father Bruno, the master of the said hermitage, and to his successors for ever †." Now hear his words when founding the monastery of Saints Peter and Paul, at Messina, "These things we propose to do with full deliberation, that the multitude of religious men may be united and assembled in this place; and we wish that by us they may have in abundance what is necessary for food, and that the place itself may be illustrated by them and supported as is fitting, that these religious men may be suppliants with the divine clemency for the whole Christian people, and for me, a sinner, that the omnipotent God may loose me from my sins ‡." Here follows the testament of William the pious, Duke of Aquitaine, concerning the foundation of the monastery of Cluny, in the year 910. "Considering that from the things which are transitorily possessed, if well used, there may result a durable reward, I, William, by the gift of God, count and duke, desiring as is lawful to provide for my salvation, have resolved to employ what has been entrusted to me for a time to provide an emolument for my soul. Therefore to all who live in the unity of the faith, and demand the mercy of Christ, be it known now and to the end of the world that on account of the love of God and of our Saviour Jesus Christ, I, William, and my wife Ingelberga, give to the holy apostles Peter and Paul the land of Cluny, which is on the river Granna, and the chapel which is there in honour of holy Mary, the mother of God, first for the love of God, then for the soul of my ancestor, King Odo, of my father and mother, for my own soul, and for that of my wife, as also for those of my brothers and sisters, and of all my relations, and for those of all my

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* Annal. Camaldul. lib. lxxx.

† Sicilia Sacra, ad an. 1094, i. 524.

‡ Id. ii. 1034.

faithful servants who adhere to my service; and also for the state and integrity of the Catholic religion; and, lastly, for all Christians in the bonds of one charity and faith, both of the past, present, and future times. I give them in order that a regular monastery may be constructed there in honour of the holy apostles Peter and Paul, to be subject to the rule of the blessed Benedict*."

But the peace, with a view to which so many monasteries were founded and endowed, was not alone of this high and spiritual kind, relating to the interior world, of the soul in its present and future state. It was also an earthly and external peace; for these institutions were known to conduce to social and political tranquillity; and that many abbeys were erected for this express end is clear from an inspection of the charters which proclaim their origin. The conviction that such was their tendency arose not merely from considering their direct spiritual operation, as when the Carthusian order every day and at each canonical hour prays for priests, for kings and people, that all may have peace†, though this was not overlooked in the middle ages, as may be witnessed in the words of the Emperor Lothaire III. to the monks of Mount Cassino.—"From ancient times your church has the reputation of religion, and given the example always of holy conversation, for which reason we trust to obtain by your prayers to God, that quiet may be restored to the universal Church, and peace granted in our times;" and in the acts of King Robert and of the Emperor of Constantinople, sending to commend themselves and their dominions to the prayers of the same monks‡; but also from an observation of the fact formerly notorious, and which has not escaped the notice of modern authors, one of whom remarks, that "no association gives such extensive guarantees of order to the state as religious communities." He might have added, too, that nothing tended more to the peace of the world, by counteracting the warlike tendencies of a national feeling, or of a mistaken and Pagan patriotism. The practical experience alluded to by the bishop of Sens, in his passport to a monk who was going to travel,

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* Bibliothec. Cluniacens. 2.

† Pet. Sutorus, De Vit. Carthus. ii. ii. 2.

‡ Hist. Casinens. Sæc. 7.

"by a divine instinct," that "wherever he finds the Christian religion, he ought to find as it were his country *," must in a great degree be attributed to the influence of the religious orders, which had spread their branches through all lands, uniting multitudes of men of different countries in the closest ties of a domestic interest, and even attaching them to localities far removed from the limits of their own nation. Thus a modern traveller, on occasion of his visit to the Grande Chartreuse in France, says that those monks, hearing that their ancient monastery of Witham in England was then in his possession, "beseeched him almost with tears in their eyes to revere these consecrated edifices, and to preserve their remains for the sake of St. Hugo." Certainly I have nowhere found the memory of England's former sanctity so fresh as in the secluded cloisters of Italy and Germany.

One evening I left Florence and walked to that Carthusian monastery which stands, like a huge castle, on a lofty hill three miles from the city, on the Roman way. In the cloisters I was presented to a venerable Father, who addressed me in English, and invited me into his cell. We sat down and for a time silently surveyed the lovely prospect from his window. We then conversed, and I learned with some surprise that he had visited England and Ireland, and had frequently been in London and Dublin I confess my veneration for him did not keep pace with my astonishment, when I found that from his Paradise of peace he looked back to his travels through these regions of discord with so much pleasure; but my distrust was quickly dissipated when he proceeded with a smile to undeceive me, saying, "Yes, I have been to London and to Dublin often in mind with my wishes, my admiration, and my prayers for your glorious country, but with my body I have never left Italy, the land of my birth." At these words he rose to obey the bell, which summoned him to vespers. I need not say with what reverence I kissed the hand which then conveyed his parting benediction.

But let us observe in how many ways the monastic orders contributed to bind closer the religious bonds of the great Christian family, which, since their suppres-

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* Lupi Epist. cvi.

sion, seem to be every year growing weaker and weaker, so that now the descendants of those who once submitted to the spiritual sway of an Italian or a Frenchman would regard a fellow countryman, who comes from a county only a few miles distant from their own, with eyes of jealousy as a stranger, so forgotten and obsolete have become the supernatural manners of faith, where there are no monks to teach them. In the first place, monks of one country were received as brethren in the monasteries of another. Many Englishmen were monks in the abbey of Mount Cassino in all ages; of whom were Aufredus in the eleventh century, and in later times Gregorius Sayr, Thomas of Preston, Michael, and Bernard. An Irishman, Rachisius, was in that monastery at the time when the chronicles were last edited *. Similarly there were many Irish monks in the abbey of Fulda, some of them recluses.

The remembrance of having owed their noblest institutions to foreign monks was well calculated to nourish a friendly feeling towards the land of their birth. The Burgundians were indebted to the holy monks of Ireland for the abbey of Luxueil, to whom also the Italians owed that of Bobbio, the Lorrainers that of St. Mansu at Toul, and the Germans that of Wirsburg, not to mention many others. The Irish founded so many churches in Europe, that a monk of the abbey of St. Gall has met with a sufficient number wherewith to compose a large volume of their foundations. The memory of foreign monks as that of benefactors could not have been wholly unproductive of the fruits of international affection. Ireland, which gave Columban to Italy, Gall to Helvetia, Kilian to Germany, and Virgilius to Carinthia, must have been regarded with gratitude by the people, who regarded them as their Apostles and Fathers. Blessed Cataldo from Ireland was venerated among the early saints of Tarentum in Calabria †, and the patron of the great Benedictine monastery of Mœck in Austria was from the same country, St. Colman of the eleventh century. The memory, too, of having conferred benefits on other countries by founding and enriching religious

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* Chron. Cas. iv. c. viii.

† Joan. Juvenis, De Antiq. et Fort. Tarentinorum, lib. viii. 2. Thes. Ant. It. ix.

houses there must have operated in opposition to all jealous and malignant feelings towards them. The alms of an Alfred, after enriching the poor monasteries of his own kingdom, to those of France, Brittany, and Ireland, and the grant of lands in Oxfordshire to the abbey of St. Denis in France by King Edward the Confessor, were not only signs but pledges of a peaceful union among nations. And here we owe it to truth and justice to remark, that from the moment of the conquest of Ireland till the fifteenth century, while the English continued to be Catholics, we find continual notice of their charity in founding or endowing monasteries in that country. William Marshal, Earl of Pembroke, founded some of almost every order, as did also Walter Lacy in the time of Richard I., and Richard Strongbow, also Earl of Pembroke. The Dillons, the Digbys, the Fitzgeralds, the Butlers, the Tyrells, the Devereuxes, the Carews, and the Prestons, were all founders of religious houses in Ireland. Maud de Lacy, Gerard de Pendergrast, John Decer, an English chief-justice in Ireland, and Geffroy Fitz-Robert, were eminent in this track. Henry II. founded the great abbey of St. Thomas at Thomastown near Dublin; Philip of Worcester, constable of Ireland, founded Kilcumin Abbey, dependant upon Glastonbury, and John de Courcy, Earl of Ulster, General of the English, founded others dependant upon English abbeys. Hugh de Lacy founded the priory of Ardes in 1218, and made it dependent on Louley of the same order in France. The abbey of little Tintern of the Vow, on the coast of Wexford, daughter of the great Tintern in Wales, was founded by William Marshal. These English noblemen, in making such foundations, were providing better for the social and political tranquillity of Ireland, than if they had been legally commissioned to preserve its peace by means of the halter and the sword, like the over-weening brood that have come after them under the banners of reformation—upstart lordlings, who blush to hear their grandsires' avocation named, and who love to play the dragon over the flying poor.

The alien monasteries, which were numerous throughout Christendom, by producing a constant intercourse between the most learned men of different countries, must have powerfully contributed to the same pacific end. The English Benedictines were naturalized in

France. In consequence of the number of Irish monks who had passed into France and Germany, many monasteries of the order of St. Benedict in those countries were built in favour of monks of that nation: such was the monastery of St. Martin at Cologne, and similar houses of Irish or Scotch monks were at Vienna, Ratisbon, Erfurth, and in many other places *, some of which, as that at Erfurth, had been founded by bishops of the diocese. Fingen, an Irish abbot, in the tenth century, the friend of the Empress Adelhard, widow of Otho the Great, bound himself and his successors to receive no other but Irish monks, as long as any such could be found; and the charter of the Irish monastery at Vienna, founded by Henry I. Duke of Austria, supplies this curious explanation for a similar ordinance, "We ordain," it says, "that only Irishmen be received into this monastery; eo quod relatione Religiosorum et de certa scientia novimus ipsorum laudabilem simplicitatem †."

But if the influence of monks was extended thus to the promotion of peace in regard to foreign countries, much more was it efficacious at home in conducing to that of their own nation, and to the stability of the government which protected them. Emperors and kings were not long in making this discovery, as their charters can bear witness. Dom Martene calls attention to those solemn exordiums of the diplomas of the ancient kings, which show how they considered monasteries as instruments of peace. "If we attend to the petitions of the servants of God, which relate to the securing of their quiet, we trust that it will conduce to the praise and stability of our kingdom." Such are the words which continually recur in the charters ‡. Charlemagne, thus magnificently styled, Charles, most serene August, crowned by God, great, pacific emperor, governing the empire of the Romans, and by the mercy of God king also of the Francs and Longobards, is far from relying upon the strong arm of power for the maintenance of peace. His words are, "Whatever we grant to venerable places, for the love of our Lord Jesus Christ, we

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* Mab. Præf. in III. Sæc. Ben. 1.

† Ap. Pez. Rer. Script. Aust. i.

‡ Martene, Veterum Scriptorum et Monumentorum Historicor. tom. i. Præfat.

trust will conduce, without doubt, to the stability of our empire [*]." His son Louis holds the same language in his charter to the monastery of St. Maximin at Treves; for it begins thus, "If we provide for the quiet of the monasteries, this will conduce to the long stability of our kingdom, and to our obtaining the recompense of the blessed poor in spirit [†]." Again, Charles the Bald says, in his charter to the monks of St. Martin of Tours, "If we confer honours on places dedicated to God, and provide for the peace and tranquillity of those serving God in them, we trust that it will tend to strengthen the state of our earthly kingdom, and promote the work of our eternal safety [‡]."

Boso, King of Burgundy, thought that by alms and oblations wars might be prevented; for in an instrument granted to Asmundus, who sought redress when his Church had been repeatedly devastated by armies, the king having called his counsellors, began to consider, as he says, "Qualiter remedio eleemosynæ cessentur bella injuste insurgentia [§]." Charles the Simple, in his charter to the Elnonensian monastery in 921, says, "If we confer necessary things and consolations on the servants of God, we believe that it will both conduce to the salvation of our soul, and also that the state of the kingdom will be longer maintained in peace, and with greater solidity secured [||]."

The diploma of Conrad II. to the monastery of Corby begins thus: "If, with pious solicitude, we provide for the peace and tranquillity of the churches of God, we hope that in return we shall receive from our Creator the grace of being able to hold the helm of the kingdom, committed to us by God, with peace and tranquillity [¶]." The diploma of King Zuendebold in 898 contains these words: "If, following the pious manner of the glorious kings our ancestors, we preserve the state of the churches inviolate by the rigour of royal authority, and consult with provident disposition for the utility of the servants of God; this, we firmly believe, will conduce to the tranquillity of our kingdom, and to our obtaining eternal beatitude *." The diploma even of Frederic I. to the bishop of Torcellano in 1177 recognizes the same principle; for the words are, "If we clemently hear the reasonable petitions of illustrious persons relative to the increase of the commodities of the churches of God, we believe that it will conduce to our eternal salvation, and to the augmentation of our temporal glory †." So also the calamities and disturbance of kingdoms are ascribed in diplomatic acts to the oppression of monasteries and churches; as by Charlemagne in his capitularies ‡. Cardinal Humbert § advises princes to consider that external wars, internal seditions, nation rising against nation, and kings against kings, are the penalties of having violated the monastic peace. When Charlemagne was asked to seize the goods of a church, he replied, "I trust that God can assist us more by the merits and prayers of His saints, than by all the military force of the world ||." When such views prevailed, one can understand the strong language of kings to express their sense of the importance of monastic foundations; as when the emperor, Otho IV., says, in 1210, in his diploma to the Church of Camerino, "From the first day in which the most high Creator, from whom all good proceeds, chose to raise us to the height of imperial dignity, it has been our full vow and intimate desire to promote religious places and persons with appropriate benefits ¶;" that is, with security for the exercise of their peaceful, holy labours; for we see by these examples that the protection of the liberty and peace of monasteries was considered after all as the most signal donation that the great could bestow upon them.

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[*] Id. p. 59.

[†] Heumann, De Re Diplom. ii. 422.

[‡] Id. p. 105.

[§] Martene, Veterum Scriptorum et Monumentorum Historicor. tom. i. p. 221.

[||] Id. i. 278.

[¶] ii. 607.

Hence those charters of emperors so multiplied to monasteries, in order that persons dedicated to God might hold and dispose places according to their rule, "longe remota contradictione, inquietudine, vel contrarietate," as Lothaire says in his diploma to the monastery of St. Saviour and Julia at Brescia. "The sublimity of royal prudence," says Henry IV. King of the Romans in

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* Gesta Trevirensium Arch. ap. id. tom. iv. p. 147.

† Murat. Antiq. It. Dissert. ii.

‡ Lib. vii. c. 104.

§ Lib. iii. Advers. Simoniac.

|| Lib. i. cap. tit. 83.

¶ Italia Sacra, i. 553.

1065, "ought in every way to provide for the peace and quiet of those who serve God *." The diploma of the emperor Lothaire II., in 1137, to Wibald, Abbot of Stavelo in the Ardennes, begins thus: "Since the imperial solicitude and power ought to consult for the peace and quiet of all the churches of God, especially should it for those of our own dominions †." The diploma of Conrad II. to the same abbot began with the same words ‡; all which decrees were only in accordance with the vows, and charges, and examples of the holy see, as when Pope Alexander III. said, "It is necessary that we diligently attend with pastoral solicitude to the peace and quiet of religious men §;" for rest of mind and quiet of body were not only delectable but necessary to the servants of God, as both science and experience, to use the expression of Ives de Chartres, convinced every community in ages of faith ||. Each founder felt himself bound to procure these advantages for the community he instituted; and hence, as Orderic Vitalis says, "The valiant knight, William Giroie, in refounding the monastery of St. Evroul at Ouches, expressed himself in these terms: 'Let these monks be established in such liberty, that henceforth neither we nor our descendants may ever demand any other retribution but their prayers; and in order that at no future time we may be able, by the instigation of the demon, to disquiet them in any manner, let us place the said monastery wholly under the protection of the duke of all Normandy, to defend it against ourselves, our descendants, and all mortals; that if we should ever pretend to require by force any service or contribution besides the spiritual benefit, we may be salutarily repressed by the severity of the prince, and forced, even in spite of ourselves, to cease from molesting the knights of God ¶.'"

This conviction respecting the immense security for peace which resulted from the institution of monasteries, was not confined to the breasts of kings; it was the universal opinion. Speaking of the priory of Leeds, Lambard, as cited by Weever, says, "That in ancient times the greatest personages held monks, friars, and

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* Ap. Martene, Vet. Script. ii. 70.

† ii. 98.

‡ Id. ii. 103.

§ Id. ii. 885.

|| Iv. Car. Epist. 164.

¶ Lib. vii. 23.

nuns, in such veneration and liking, that they thought no city in case to flourish, no house likely to have long continuance, no castle sufficiently defended, where was not an abbey, priory, or nunnery, either placed within the walls, or situate at hand, and near adjoining *." And thus Robert Fabian, in his commendation of London, written in the reign of King Henry VII., says, that Christ hath ever preserved that city " by meane of divine servyce ; that in contynual wyse is kept in devout guyse wythin the mure of yt. As houses of relygyon in diverse places of thys towne, whyche in great devocyon ben ever occupyed : when one hath done another begyn, so that of prayer they never blyn such order is these houses wythin wyth all virtue allyed." We may remark, too, that many monasteries were founded with an express view to make compensation to the people for the former miseries of war. The peaceful foundation of Camaldoli in Poland was made shortly after the country had been ravaged by the incursions of Tartars, Muscovites, and Transylvanians, and by the intestine discords of the great; to repair which horrors, pious men sought to establish the pacific family of Romuald on the mountain to which they expressly gave the name of Peace. Similarly the Scotch monasteries of Kelso, Melrose, Holyrood, Jedburgh, Newbottle, Kinloss, and Dryburgh, were founded by King David expressly to compensate for the sufferings of the people from the border wars to which they were continually exposed, and to serve them as places of shelter, since the sacred territory of the religious houses generally escaped these ravages.

It may be observed also, that the introduction of new religious orders into countries or cities which had not before received them, was always the peaceful result of a conviction of the utility which would result from them to society. The Capuchins were introduced into Avignon, in 1576, by a nobleman of that city, who, hearing of their great virtue, wrote to the general, and offered to build them a convent at his own expense. They were called into Spain without their having taken any measures for that end ; but God inspired a certain apothecary of Barcelona, named Michael Quirolio, with a strong desire to procure their reception into that city. This Michael

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* On Funeral Mon. p, 287.

was a good man, so respected by the consuls, that they acquiesced in his demand, and wrote to the general of the order inviting him there *.

In conclusion we should observe, that all these motives conspiring, contributed to impress many kings and men of power, in ages of faith, with an intimate conviction that it was impossible for any occasion to arise when it would be lawful to alienate the goods of the religious houses. The emperor Otho I., being in great straits in his war against Henry, his brother, and Gilbert, Duke of Lorraine, a certain count, who had followed and served him faithfully in all his wars, prayed him by letters to give him an abbey, which was then vacant, that he might employ its revenues to pay his soldiers. The emperor, with a smiling countenance, told the gentleman who brought the letter that he wished to give the count an answer by word of mouth. The count on hearing this was overjoyed, supposing that his request was granted; and, accordingly, coming to the emperor's presence, he found him in the midst of the people; and the emperor replied in presence of them all, "We must obey God rather than man. For who is so blind as not to perceive that the request which you have now made me is not a request but an open menace, in the necessity to which you see me reduced? But it is written, Give not that which is holy to dogs: which passage, being taken by doctors in an allegorical sense, I should esteem it giving it to dogs if I should give to him who follows secular war a monastery, which is intended for monks who militate under the standard of God alone. For this reason I wish you to learn, before all this people, that you ask from me with such arrogance a gift so unreasonable, that you shall never obtain it from me, nor any thing else that you may ask from me in future. Therefore, if you wish to take flight to the side of these rebels, the sooner you depart the better." These magnanimous words of so great an emperor produced such an effect on the count, that he threw himself on his knees, and implored forgiveness of the fault into which he had inadvertently fallen †.

The charters have detained us long; yet we ought not

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* Annal. Capucinorum, 1576.

† Pasquier, Recherches de la France, lib. iii. 12.

to close them without observing, as a corollary, that not alone the monks were blessed as the true pacific, and that the monasteries were instruments of peace to diffuse order and tranquillity through the world, but also that a vast majority of the innumerable men who founded religious houses have an unquestionable title to be ranked in the same happy number; for such is the conclusion that we deduce from them. In the beginning we find that christian woman who, by nature and grace, are so essentially peacemakers, came forward as the first founders. Paula, that noble Roman lady, built four; Pulcheria, the sister of Theodosius the younger, and Eudocia, his wife, many monasteries. Then who were the princes and nobles that followed in that track? Precisely those who were most eminently pacific in desire; such as Charlemagne, who built so many, and his devout son Louis, who was so enamoured with peace that he wished to devote himself to it in a cloister. Historians tell us that when he was proceeding on the expedition against the king of Bavaria, he passed by Soissons, and went to pray in the Abbey of St. Medard. It was with a profound sadness and presentiment of death that the old emperor took leave of this moûtier, which he had so loved, and where he had so much suffered. Many times he turned his head towards it and shed tears, when the towers disappeared from the horizon. Theuther, Provost of St. Medard, a man faithful in all things, was riding at his side, and endeavoured, while weeping himself, to console his emperor, and asked him why he was so much afflicted? Louis, knowing that these words issued from a faithful heart, opened his own to Theuther. "You know," said he, "how much I have loved this place, which I shall never see again, as the holy martyr has revealed to me. I vowed him a vow, the effect of which the troubles of my empire have prevented; and if I did not think that my enemies would impute it to fear, or rather, what is more to be dreaded, that the Almighty would disapprove of the execution of my vow, I would have laid aside my arms here and my imperial purple. What ought I to do?" "Your vow is good," replied the monk, "glorious Cæsar, but the will of God is better. It is a great thing to renounce the world for thy salvation: but it is still greater to watch over the safety of all. What was most admirable in Christ was His dying for

His servants. It will be glorious, then, for you to combat, if it must be so even to death, for the flock which Christ has confided to you." Louis, strengthened by these words, took leave of the Provost and of the brethren who had escorted him, and departed by the road to Aix-la-Chapelle and the Rhine *. The adieu, as he foresaw, was for the last time. In a few months after he died in an island of the Rhine near Mayence.

Another great founder of monasteries was the King St. Louis, so eminent for his love of peace, who built in Paris, besides the Holy Chapel, the Church of the Holy Cross; the hospital for the blind; and the Hotel Dieu; the monasteries of the Quatre Mendians; of the Chartreuse; the Blanc-Manteaux; and the Filles Dieu; in the diocese of Beauvais, the Abbey of Royaumon; and in Rouen, the Abbey of St. Mathew; besides the hospitals of Compiegne, Pontoise, and Vernon †. Among the feudal nobility, the founders of monasteries were similarly the same men who have already, on so many occasions, passed before us as the meek of the earth, the just, the merciful, and the pacific. Does history commemorate an "indefatigable protector of the poor" as Richard, Duke of Normandy, is styled by William of Jumiège? The same is also sure to be designated as "the faithful servant of Christ, and the tender father of monks ‡." The great and good, whose memory is in benediction, the hero-like Winrich von Kniprode, grandmaster of the Teutonic order, in whose praise no contemporary is silent, will leave it impossible for future ages to question his attachment to the religious orders. "It was a natural consequence of his piety," says Voight, "that he should have been inclined to favour monasteries. How much he loved them, Oliva and Pelplin, and many other religious houses, can bear witness. He built or promoted the Augustinian convent of Heiligenbeil; the monastery of Konitz; that of the Holy Trinity at Grosswaldeck, on the spot where the heathen Prussians used to sacrifice to their gods; the convent of St. Mary in Königsberg; that of the Minors at Wehlan; and the Carthusian monastery in Dantzig, which was completed a year before his death §." The humble and pacific man

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* Liber de Translatione S. Sebast. i.

† Pasquier, iii. 22.

‡ Lib. v. 17.

§ Geschichte Preussens, v. 390.

who, like the Marquis Leopold of Austria, refuses, as being unworthy, to lay the first stone of the monastery which he himself founds, as was seen when that of Newenburg was to be built, of which he said that a clerk or monk should place the foundation *, is sure to be one of the foremost to protect and favour whatever belongs to the monastic state.

Accordingly we find that the monks were always conscious of the peaceful character of those who encouraged and protected them. Thus we read in the annals of the Abbey of Mount Oliva, "Here lived Mistwinus, a pacific and devout prince, who enriched and favoured this monastery †." Where they could not praise their founder for other virtues, they evince delight in being able to proclaim with enthusiasm his love of peace. Thus on the tomb of John Galeazza Visconti, in the Carthusian monastery which he founded at Pavia, we read these verses—

> "Cujus pietasque, fidesque
> Sacraque justitia et clementia sanguinis expers
> Innocuam fecere animam. Nec dulcior alter
> Eloquio, nec magnificis præstantior alter,
> Nec fuit in totis Europæ finibus unquam
> Aptior imperiis princeps, nec sanctior alter
> Relligione fuit, nec pacis amantior illo:
> Ipse graves populis cruda de sede tyrannos
> Dejecit, fregit tumidos, stravitque superbos.
> Hic erat unde quies magnorum certa laborum
> Italiæ speranda foret."

The tenant of this tomb has been confounded by some authors with his successor, John Maria Visconti, whose effigy is in the same monastery, and who, as a most cruel prince, is generally represented with two bulldogs at his side, which he used to let loose upon the people: but the founder had many qualities of a great man. It was he who, when a child, being invited by his father, Galeazza, to point out who was the wisest of the company, which consisted of many grave and robed men, after considering a little in silence, went up to Petrarch, whom he had never seen before, and took him by the cloak, and led him to his father. Through life he evinced the same

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* Chronic. Claustro-Neoburg. ap. Pez. Script. Rer. Aust. i.

† Annal. Mon. Oliv. 8.

judgment, for he never was deceived by men or events. "This is less strange," says Paul Jovius, "when we consider his inveterate custom of walking and meditating alone, of seeking examples from old annals, and studying the institutions of the fathers. No hunting, or gambling, or dissolute pleasures led him from business, but always he exercised his mind in solid studies. He founded many noble libraries, and chose the wisest men for his council. There was a crowd of writers in his palace, who took down notes of every thing relative to the government; for he regulated even the number of dishes for solemn feasts. No prince of Italy, from the time of the Goths, flourished in greater power or splendour of life, and no one was comparable to him, if we regard his innate gravity and prudence, his dignity of form and countenance, or his study of virtue. The Florentines objected to him diverse lusts, but," says Paul Jovius, "they only sought to blacken their enemy." Admitting, however, that he had many faults, the monks believed that he was a lover of peace, while Italy acknowledged him as one of her greatest men *.

In conclusion we may observe, that even some features in the material construction of monasteries bear witness to the existence of desires in the men who erected them which are intimately connected with a love of peace. Such are those secret chambers and tribunes, expressly provided in order that the founders might assist at the solemn offices of the choir. Of these we have seen many instances. Thus in the Franciscan convent in Cork was an apartment built by the founder, Mackarty, surnamed the great, expressly for himself, to which he used to retire on the great festivals; and similarly in the upper story of the abbey of the Celestins, at Marcoucies, there was a little lodging, called the founder's rooms, where John de Montaigu used to make occasional retreats, and assist at the offices, there being a window in it which opened over the sanctuary of the church. It would be but fair to conclude also that men who could agree together to make such foundations in common, must have had many qualities analogous to the object which these were intended to answer. Men who were not pacific, could hardly have acted thus in concert for a

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* Græv. Thes. Antiq. It. iii.

holy end, which might so easily minister to the secret purposes of egotism. The Cistercian Abbey of Ebrach was founded in 1126 by two brothers, Berno and Richwin, noble lords of Ebran, with the aid of their sister Bertha. The great Abbey of St. Urban, of the same order, in a forest in the canton of Lucerne, was founded by three brothers, Lutolph, Wernher, and Ulrich von Langenstein, whose castle was in the neighbourhood at Roth *.

Lastly, the affection expressed for monasteries by their founders proves that they could appreciate with peaceful hearts the good of such pacific institutions. Hartmann, Count of Kyburg, the successor of Berthold, founder of the city of Friburg, in his letters of protection to the monastery of Hauterive, expresses himself in these remarkable terms. "I command and I humbly ask you to honour and love the religious house of Alteripa, and whoever wishes to love and serve me should love it, and avoid doing it the least injury. I take it under my protection. Let every one know that whoever offends against that house, or injures it, offends against my person. This is my command to all our citizens of Friburg, that whenever they hear or know of any injury being committed against it, they should so act towards the perpetrators as if the injury had been inflicted on my person †."

The monastery of Swethl, or Claravallis, in Austria, was founded by Hadmar de Cüopham, a rich nobleman, in the year 1135. Godeschalcus, Abbot of the Holy Cross at Ratisbon, at his request, sent to him Hermann, to be abbot, with twelve other brothers, whom he received with all veneration. Having been determined as to the site for his foundation by a dream, he had the spot cleared of trees, and the walls marked out; then mounting his horse, with Hermann, he gave for the monastery all the territory that he could encompass in one ride, whether in woods, waters, marshes, meadows, villages, towns, or churches. After many years the pious founder took the cross, with Leopold VIII., Duke of Austria, and departed to Egypt for Palestine. Before he

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* Jaeck Gallerie der Klöster Deutschlands, i.

† Fundatio Monast. de Altaripa, ap. Martene, Vet. Script. tom. vi.

set out, he came to the monastery with his two sons, Henry and Hadmar, and asked permission to enter the chapter, which being easily granted, he took leave of them all with many tears, saying to the brethren, "I know truly that I shall never again see this house while in my mortal body." Then he exhorted his two sons to love and defend it, telling them that otherwise they would incur the divine vengeance. So saying, he took off his belt, studded with silver and gold, and gave it to his eldest son Henry, saying, "Behold! I exonerate myself from the care of this holy house and congregation, and on you, beloved son, do I impose the burden of defending it, because, alas! I am compelled, unwilling, with death before me imminent, to desert this house which I have loved, and ever shall love, with all my strength. Love it as your heart and soul; and take this belt as the token of that love, and wear it next your heart, that you may never forget how it has been commended to your love, and that you may enjoy an eternal peace with all the saints." Then turning to his younger son, Hadmar, he gave him his best ring, and said, "Lo! beloved son, you have my name, you are my flesh and bone. I commend to you this house and congregation, that faithfully embracing and serving it you may possess an eternal mansion. In sign of the love that you ought to have towards this house, I deliver to you this ring, the sign and pledge of love." Then turning to the monks, who were all weeping, he said, "Beloved fathers and brothers, I commend to you my soul, that if perchance you cannot have my body, at least you may never forget my soul on account of God." Finally, calling into the chapter some of his secretaries who were to go with him to Jerusalem, he said, "O most dear and beloved, who for the sake of the kingdom of heaven are about to go with me into long banishment, and who perhaps are to behold my death, I adjure you by the tremendous day of judgment, that if you cannot bring back my body to this place of my foundation, at least you will bring back my heart and my right hand to this beloved house; for I know that after my death this house can hardly have so cheerful a giver, or so benevolent and faithful a protector." Then bidding farewell to all, both old and young, he went out of the chapter, and entering the church, threw himself on his knees before the high altar, offering the secret prayers of his heart to God. Then proceeding forth, turning back repeatedly and sobbing, the abbot, monks, and lay brothers all accompanied him as far as the exterior gate. He wept aloud, and ejaculated, commending himself to God and to the blessed Virgin. Then mounting his horse, he rode slowly on, but on coming to high ground at a place called Gaisrueck, whence he could contemplate the monastery in the valley below, he paused awhile. Resuming his course, still he turned round his horse frequently, casting back looks of sorrow, till at length, when the monastery could hardly be discerned any longer, he alighted a second time, and prostrating himself on the earth, with many tears commended again and again the monastery to God and to the blessed Virgin. When he reached the sea the weather was tempestuous. The sailors inviting him to embark, he besought them to wait till midnight, for he said he knew for certain that the Lord would still the waves at that hour, when his monks in Zwiethl would rise for matins and intercede for him. The event seemed to verify his words, for the wind fell at midnight, and the ship had a happy passage: but no sooner had he landed than he fell sick, and then being duly fortified by the sacraments, he rendered up his spirit to God on the vigil of St. Mary Magdalene in 1217. His servants, preserving his heart and right hand, brought them back with his bones to the monastery, and buried them in the chapter. Ebro, the abbot, described these scenes after what he had heard from those who were eye-witnesses *.

But we are taking scholar's road, not seeking the shortest way, but exploring every by-path, like boys who seem searching for an excuse to prolong their walk. The guide who is to conduct us on our return from the abbey waits however at the gate. Yet we have culled some fruit that may please well from this delay; for even to this last moment our researches, however indirect, into the history of these institutions, have added confirmation to our first statement. After so general and faithful a perambulation of the monastic state, we may confidently rest in that conclusion. Its identity with peace and all pacific interests may be to other observers a matter of theory; to us it must ever be henceforth a matter of

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* Gasp. Jongel. Notit. Abb. Ord. Cist. liv. iv. 24.

fact. Peaceful was its object, peaceful even the locality it required, peaceful the origin of all its creations, peaceful the employment it enforced, peaceful the rule on which it depended, peaceful the wisdom which characterized it, and peaceful the discourse and manner of its children. Attached to their cells and to their own congregations, they were at peace with themselves, with their brethren, with every other order in the Church, and with all mankind. Peaceful was their influence; they conciliated rich and poor; their monasteries were founded as instruments of order and stability, as places of rest for the people, and as fortresses for the state; their founders were eminent for qualities analogous to such institutions, being themselves men of meekness and peace. If the monks whom they endowed so richly might be said to reign, the world should remember that they displayed at least the treasures which Plato required in those who ruled over mankind,—goodness and wisdom. Others might serve society by defending with arms its material interests; they sought to establish its happiness by diffusing tranquillity, and cultivating all the arts which can adorn the human existence. Theirs was a glory which never cost any one a sigh or a tear. Other reigns, as Tacitus remarks, are always pacific in the commencement; theirs was peaceful to the end. What more can be added? You may easily banish monks from your courts and from your parliaments, from your universities and your palaces, but not from the hearts of men: for, thanks to these holy champions of the Spouse, who came thus to her succour, whose fame yet lives, and shall live long as nature lasts,—

"——— The world has seen
A type of peace. And as some most serene
And lovely spot to a poor maniac's eye,
After long years, some sweet and moving scene
Of youthful hope, returning suddenly,
Quells his long madness,—thus man shall remember thee."

CHAPTER XX.

So now we are to take leave of the good monks, whom perhaps we shall never behold again. We must depart:

"our lives flow in different directions," as Poujolat said, on a similar occasion, to a Friar Antonio; and probably we shall not see each other more in this world. "Ah, Signor!" methinks I hear the monk reply, "it is even so: we are used to this. We see men whom we love for a day, and then it is finished. May the will of God be done. Take these flowers, these rosaries, these little pictures, for my sake." "We must separate," the departing guest says to him again. The monk lifts up his head, and a smile of indescribable melancholy and tenderness lights up the countenance which that dark hood overshadows. The Father accompanies him to the abbey gate. After making ten or twelve steps, the traveller turns his head to look back, and there is the monk still standing, with tears in his eyes. "No!" exclaims one who has witnessed such a scene; "never shall I forget him. This meeting has been one of the sweetest impressions from my journey to Italy's delightful land: it will ever constitute one of my fondest recollections."

Our course to the monastery was enlivened by discourse concerning the origin of different abbeys. Our return through the forest may be rendered profitable by turning aside a little to visit the hermits who lived solitary within a short distance of the monks. As Sordello says to Dante,—

"——————— To the right
Some spirits sit apart retir'd. If thou
Consentest, I to these will lead thy steps;
And thou wilt know them, not without delight."

This excursion will introduce to us a distinct branch of the pacific family that we are leaving, and enable us to complete, as if from personal observation, our history of those who inherited the beatitude of the peaceful; and well pleased methinks one ought to be at any invitation that will keep us longer under the leaves, inhaling the sweet mountain air, that will give us a few more breezes of the morning,—a few more wanderings, as if guided by the spirit described by Shakspeare "through bog, through bush, through brake, through briar," hearing the chiming of angelic bells, interrupted only by the murmuring of a river that doth fall from rock to rock transpicuous. Besides, who that is now bent on view of novel sights will be slow to turn from his road, when the allurement is to see a hermit, living in solitude remote, like him who for a dance was dragged to martyrdom? The heart, even in its blithest mood, cleaves to such an image, as poets well discerned, who so often chose it for their song: as in the lines,—

> "A little lowly hermitage it was,
> Downe in a dale, hard by a forest's side,
> Far from resort of people, that did pass
> In travaill to and froe: a little wyde
> There was an holy chapell edifyde,
> Wherein the hermite dewly went to say
> His holy things each morne and eventyde:
> Thereby a christall streame did gently play,
> Which from a sacred fountaine welled forth alway [*]."

And in the next,—

> "Thence forward by that painful way they pas
> Forth to an hill, that was both steepe and hy;
> On top whereof a sacred chappell was,
> And eke a little hermitage thereby,
> Wherein an aged holy man did lie,
> That day and night paid his devotion,—
> Of God and goodnes was his meditation [†]."

Never did any with more speed haste to their profit, or flee from their annoyance, than would a youth in days of yore, when such a father was described, spring upon his horse and ride to visit him. The race of hunters who find delight in piercing through the woods can still be found. Let there be then also those who, as the poet says, "chase through the forest of the pathless past these recollected pleasures." The very intimation of a course through deserts to the hermitage, which would have charmed those dames and knights of antique days, renews the joy I felt when first I did inhale the Tuscan air.

This mode of life dates from the earliest ages. We read that Elias and Elisha, and the sons of the prophets, dwelt in the wildernesses, and built themselves tabernacles near the banks of the Jordan. Similar men were described by Moses, as the sons of Seth, who separated themselves to the service of God [‡]. Hence we read that the missionaries of that order which took its name from

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[*] Spenser, i. 1.

[†] Id. i. 10.

[‡] Middendorp, Originum Anachoreticarum Sylva, Præf.

Mount Carmel, where Elias dwelt, and to which Pythagoras repaired to enjoy the solitude of its temple *, found a great advantage in Persia from their character as children of the prophet Elija, whose authority is so great throughout the East †. In the constitutions of the blessed Rodulph, the fourth Prior of Camaldoli, given in the year 1080, we find cited the examples, not only of David and Elias, of Elijah and St. John the Baptist, of our Saviour and the ancient Fathers of the desert, but also those of the Gentile philosophers, "who, though they followed other camps, are not to be despised," adds the holy man, "since they made philosophy consist in the meditation of death, and in the renouncement of pleasure: they despised riches and fled the world, saying that it was difficult to be rich and wise. And they indeed were not instructed by doctrines, or excited by examples, or won by promises, to choose such an admirable life; and yet some of us Christians are more tepid than they were; and, for an eternal reward, have less fervour than these men evinced for fame and glory. O shame, to be more indifferent than infidels! Whence is this? Is there not a country in exile, a feast in the desert, pleasures in penitence, joys in the place of horror and of vast solitude ‡?" In fact, to show that our Lord Jesus demonstrated the similitude of all ecclesiastical professions in Himself, the author of an ancient manuscript, found in the abbey of St. James at Liege, observes that Christ proposed Himself as a model to hermits, as well as to monks; for when they sought to make Him a king, we read that He fled to a mountain alone; and elsewhere, that He walked no more openly with the Jews, but withdrew into a region near the desert to the city of Ephrem, where He remained with His disciples; and again, that in those days He went to a mountain to pray, and was all night in prayer to God §. How soon the Church reckoned hermits among her visible children, may be learned from the histories of the fathers of the desert: but indeed, in all regions, they seem to have followed the first preachers of

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* Jamblich. de Pyth. Vit. 3.

† Dosithée, Vie de S. Jean de la Croix.

‡ Annal. Camaldul. tom. iii. Append.

§ Liber de Diversis Ordinibus quæ sunt in Ecclesia, ap. Martene, Vet. Script. tom. ix.

the faith. During the persecution of Aurelian, we find an anchorite in Gaul, St. Parre, whose hermitage was near the city of Troyes. The emperor, when this holy man was brought into his presence, addressed him in disdainful mood, "I hear that you are of a noble race, and yet you pass your days like a wolf in solitude!" After the time of St. Jerome, when it became the opinion of holy men that generally the life in community which supplied examples of every grace, and delivered each member from all personal cares, was preferable to the solitary life, there still continued to be hermits, who either wandered through the deserts, living upon roots, and having no fixed habitation, or built huts for themselves under some rocks, or in forests, where the peasants supplied their necessary wants. All through the middle ages, however, such a life was deemed fitting only for men of great perfection, so constituted as not to brook transporting from that cloudless air: "for solitude," says Peter of Blois, "endangers many. They wandered in the desert, saith the text, and perished by serpents. I consider serpents the viperous thoughts which encompass you in solitude *." Moreover, a life of this kind in the woods was not wholly without danger. In the vast solitudes of Palestine the hermits were sometimes killed by the Saracens; and even in Europe, from impious Christians they used to suffer violence and death. Hence, in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, hermits began, after the example of the recluses, to live two or three together. Thus Ascelin, Seigneur of Marly-la-ville in the twelfth century, retired into the deep solitary valley where stood the abbey of Herivaux in after time, and there led a secluded life of devotion for thirty years, with some companions, hermits, whom he had assembled round him. In 1160, with their consent, he obtained leave from Maurice de Sully, Bishop of Paris, to unite the little community under the rule of St. Augustin †.

In many places of Switzerland and Germany these wood-brothers lived thus a godly life, and revived the habits of the primitive hermits. Thus Brother John, called of Rutberg, in the wilderness of Sedel, near Ganterschwil, is described as resembling those in ancient times. After the manner of the holy Fathers, with his

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* Contra Depravat.

† Lebeuf, iv.

brethren, he so devoted himself to God, under a strict eremetical rule of life, that he drew not a few to piety, by the mere force of his example*. Some priests of St. Gall lived with him; and multitudes, great and low, came to be edified by the spectacle. Count Frederic of Toggenburg bestowed on them and their successors the ground, on which they might build their houses and chapel; and Henry, Bishop of Constance, took them under his protection, and confirmed their hermitage. Others gave them such large alms that they were able to buy some other land from the convent of Maggenau. Similarly, in other places, hermits were fixed; the priests of the parish sometimes setting apart for them whatever was collected at certain masses. The most celebrated of the German wood-brothers was Bernard, who, in 1400, lived in great holiness at Pfanneregg. Generally they supported themselves by working with their hands, and by casual alms. They belonged to no order; but, like the anachorites of Thebaid and Syria, remained in solitude as long as they wished, and where they wished †.

This vocation to a solitary religious life being not limited to any age, the Church expressly provided a manner of fulfilling it that would suit all times, and be exempt from dangers and inconveniences; and accordingly, in the Carthusian order, which was a re-establishment of the eremetical life, solitude was enjoyed without its perils, and combined with the advantages of a life in community ‡. The institution of the hermits of Camaldoli was established with the same view. Those belonging to the latter order, who lived in the wood of Grosbois, in the diocese of Paris, are thus described by the Abbé Châtelain, who visited them in 1675: "They have nine cells, forming two little streets; and in each cell there is an oratory for mass. They say matins at one in the morning, tierce before mass, sextes immediately before dinner, nones at two, vespers before supper, and complin on retiring to rest §. In deserts of this kind men used to make retreats for a season. Thus Ugolino, Bishop of Ostia, cardinal, and afterwards Pope

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* Confirmatio Episc. Constant. 1375.

† Ildefons von Arx, Geschichte des S. Gall, ii.

‡ Pet. Sutorus, De Vita Carthusiana, lib. i. 19. ii. iii. i.

§ Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, xiii. 41.

Gregory IX., withdrew into that of Camaldoli, on the Tuscan mountains, along with St. Francis of Assisi, where his cell is still shown, with a chapel, at the end of the desert, immediately adjoining that of St. Francis. Still, however, the ancient and original life of anachorites, without such resources and security, was perpetuated in the Church throughout the middle ages. Then, as we find from the life of St. Wulstan, the vast wood of the Malvern Hills contained the holy hermits Aldwin and Guido *. Then St. Guthlac followed the same peaceful life in the fens of Lincolnshire, making his hut of reeds from the oozy bed around some islet, that far beneath where the wave beats it, produces them in store; on which solitary tract the effigy of a hermit still recals him before the lonely hostels, that for many ages have not seen sailing on those waters a living man that contemplates. Then, as in the eleventh century, there were in Italy solitary hermits, Andreas Zocrard; John Vincent, who had been Archbishop of Ravenna; and Bononius, who had penetrated into the centre of Egypt, before fixing himself in the solitude of Pereus. Then, in almost every extensive tract of desert country, whether forest or bare stony ridge that rose still higher than the thunder's voice, some holy anachorite, unguarded and unaided, save by casual charity, was known to dwell,—

—— οἵτ' ἄλσεα καλὰ νέμονται,
καὶ πηγὰς ποταμῶν καὶ πίσεα ποιήεντα †.

In the middle ages such men could easily choose and construct their own abode. The ancient laws allow a common traveller, passing through a forest, to light a fire, to let his horse graze, and to pull down branches; if he perceive the trunk of a tree that may be of service to his cart, he may cut it down for the purpose ‡. Under the forest laws, hermits, by a general tacit understanding, were privileged persons, and might remain in the woods unmolested. Frequently their hermitages were however often built, or at least kept in repair, by the peasants and poor villagers, who used also to charge themselves with supplying the holy man who chose it for his abode with food, which was the same as that which they gave to their own children,—cheese, and milk, and fruits; for the little garden adjoining supplied roots. They would also at intervals furnish him with a new hood, and with skins for his bed*: for—wiser than some minute moralists, who, now perplexing others as themselves, accuse him of neglecting duties—they knew that his heart, ever bent on working good, responded in every pulse to the common heart of humankind; and that he only followed meekly his vocation, diffusing his good influence to bless the earth. They had often proof, besides, how much he loved them. One old hermit at Cuziba used to go by night and sow the fields of such poor persons as had not the means of procuring seed. Whenever he saw any one weary with a burden, he would assist him to carry it: he would even mend the shoes of the poor, and carry water and provisions for them†. Pambus, another of the ancient anachorites, said in dying, "From the time when I first came into this desert place, I never spent a day without doing something with my hands." The affinity which seemed to exist between solitary religious men and certain localities might suggest a reflection on the œconomy of the Church, which never permitted that any thing should be lost or thrown away: for as in the natural world the process of decomposition conduces to the life of animals, so in the spiritual order deserted edifices—as ruined monasteries—used to be selected by hermits for their abode, that there might be no waste of such precious fragments. Thus at Châtres, in the diocese of Paris, the church of St. Germain, of Auxerre, standing solitary, serving only to the devotion of a few scattered houses at a distance, in the seventh century St. Corbinien availed himself of the solitude, and, building a cell near it, lived there as a recluse, until the people flocking to him—great lords, and even Pepin, mayor of the palace, sending to desire his prayers—the holy man was troubled, and after fourteen years departed on a pilgrimage‡.

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* Rer. Angl. Script.

† Il. xx. 8.

‡ Michelet, Origin du Droit, 411.

The abbey of Hiverneau becoming uninhabited about the year 1560, some hermits repaired there and took up undisturbed possession. One of these was Brother Remounet d'Arces, of the ancient house of Arces, in Dauphiny, who was instructed in letters in his youth, and suffered himself to slide into the heresy of these times, which began in his day, in which he remained during twenty years, and bore arms for them. At length, after hearing the sermons, and frequenting the company of great preachers and doctors, he gave himself to prayer and study for four years, comparing the books of the heretics with those of the Catholics, and in the end recognized his error, abjured it, and as a penance came to this hermitage in the year 1588, where he spent the rest of his life. After giving all his goods to the poor, he built himself a little lodging in this place, and devoted his whole time to prayer, to assisting the poor, and consoling the afflicted. He even began to write certain works of morals, and others on the mysteries of religion against heresies; but his labours were interrupted by death in 1598, in the fifty-ninth year of his age, to the great grief of the nobility and of all the people,"—this is the substance of his epitaph. He used to be called Brother Marcian or Raimond. He had remained there two years unknown. Henry IV. visited him, calling him his carabine; and when he heard the news of his death he said, "Voilà, comme Dieu attire à soi les bons *."

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* Monteil, Hist. des Français, tom. iv. p. 320.

† Sophron. Pratum Spirituale, 24.

‡ Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, x.

In general, however, the spot chosen by such men for their habitation was near some monastery, which supplied their wants; where, as Dante says,—

> "So firmly to God's service they adher'd,
> That with no costlier viands than the juice
> Of olives, easily they pass'd the heats
> Of summer, and the winter frosts, content
> In heav'n-ward musings."

In the eleventh century, the abbey of St. John the Baptist, at Tourtal, in Suabia, attracted many hermits, who selected the desert valley around it for their abode. "In that vast wilderness," says the chronicle of Berthold of Constance, "as if in an uninhabitable place, inaccessible from the density of the forest and the snow-capt precipices of rocks, they militated for God." Thus St. Benedict, after remaining three years unknown to men, and known only to God,—as St. Bernard says †,—

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* Id. xii. p. 98.

† De S. Ben. Abb. Serm.

became a cherished neighbour of monks at Subiaco. There being no path from the cell of the monk who supplied him with provisions to the cavern, which lay at the bottom of a precipitous ravine, this good man, standing on the brink, used to let down the food into the deep abyss by a long cord, to the end of which a little bell was fastened, in order that the hermit might know when it arrived.

The Benedictines commemorate these first years of their founder in their hymn for vespers on his festival,—

> "Ille florentes peragebat annos
> Cum puer dulcis patriæ penates
> Liquit, et solus latuit silenti
> Conditus antro.
> Inter urticas, rigidosque sentes
> Vicit altricem scelerum juventam;
> Inde conscripsit documenta vitæ
> Pulchra beatæ."

Similarly, near the abbey of Croyland, where was the wooden cell of St. Guthlac, dwelt certain hermits, in holy familiarity with God. One was a nobleman but lately converted to the Catholic faith, and named Cissa, who, having left all, followed Christ. Another was Bettellinus, a third Egbert, a fourth Tatwinus. The fame of St. Guthlac, in the time of King Ethelred, gave a great interest to the monastery of Croyland, near which he lived. He was descended from Icles, Lord of the Mercians. Tecta and Penvald were his parents. Felix the Burgundian, says Orderic Vitalis, wrote the gests of this holy hermit, but in a prolix style. "I undertake," he adds, "to speak briefly of his life, at the prayer of my brethren, with whom I spent five weeks at Croyland, by the benevolent order of the venerable Abbot Goisfred. Doubtless the recital of the holy deeds of the Saxons, or English beyond the sea, will not be less useful to faithful Cisalpines than the history of the Greeks or Egyptians, concerning whom one reads such long and profitable narrations, collected by the zeal of holy doctors *." Some men lived as hermits within the very walls of the monastery. Thus Dungal, an Irish recluse, resided within the abbey of St. Denis, where he wrote a book in the year 810. Sometimes men passed from the eremetical to the

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* Hist. lib. iv.

monastic life. The humble and blessed James, a religious man of the order of the seraphical Father St. Francis, had lived some time in his own country, Andalusia, as a hermit, near a certain old and solitary church, in the company of a devout priest, who was a hermit, wearing the same habit with him, and employing himself in the holy exercises of prayer and meditation. They had both one garden, which they cultivated, as well to shun idleness, as to sustain their poor life. They also employed themselves in making spoons, dishes, and such like things, of wood; which they either gave to the poor, or else sold them, that they might give alms with the price of them[*].

But now, eager to discover one who in his life revives the saintly anachorite, let us bend our thoughts exclusively to find him: though, when we shall succeed, I scarce can say: for how shall the wish that takes us over the mountain be fulfilled, if there be no clue to guide us beside this most remote, most wild, untrodden path? How shall we discover the hermitage, riding thus at a venture, beneath green leaves and gloomy branches, that often overbrow a bleak and alpine cliff? Hermits were so free from what Montaign terms the cowardly ambition of wishing to draw glory from their concealment, that they acted like the animals which efface the track at the entrance of their den. This could not, however, always be effected. The Père Sicard followed long that road of the angels composed of a number of stones, for many days' journey, through the desert, which used of old to direct the steps of the anachorites[†]. What may excite surprise is the circumstance that some paths through places now most populous were first made by hermits, who little could foresee what men would in after ages tread them. Thus, in ancient times, there was a causeway from Highgate, made by a hermit who lived on the summit, leading to the village of Islington. Even where faith and innocence prevailed, they shunned the neighbourhood of a thoroughfare; in that respect alone like Sarpedon:—

ἤτοι ὁ κὰπ πεδίον τὸ ᾿Αλήϊον οἶος ἀλᾶτο,
ὃν θυμὸν κατέδων, πάτον ἀνθρώπων ἀλεείνων[‡].

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[*] Ribadineira Novemb. ii.

[†] Let. Edif. v. xxix.

[‡] Il. vi. 201.

In 1213, Pope Innocent sent letters to Count Guido, complaining of his having made a public road through the desert, near the hermitage of Camaldoli, on which not only armed men, but actors and actresses pass; thus disturbing the peace and tranquillity of these holy men serving God in solitary meditation. He entreats him to consider his old age, and how his life cannot be long, and that after death only his works can follow him; and adds, that, if he refuses, he will order his brethren, the Archbishop of Pisa, and the Bishops of Florence and Arezzo, to stop that public way by censure ecclesiastic *. After St. Romuald had constructed the cells on the mountain, perceiving that the silence of the desert was interrupted by the crowds of strangers who came to visit them, in order to remove from the hermits all secular sounds, he built lower down, at a spot most agreeable for its beauty, a large hospice to receive the strangers; and there he left one monk, who was a priest, and three lay brethren, to receive strangers with all the sweetness of holy charity. This hospice became the monastery which was so celebrated †.

Perhaps a description of some favourite haunts of hermits will serve to direct our steps in quest of them: for we find that, in general, their predilections in this respect were very similar. With this view it will be needless to speak of islands to which we cannot now pass over, though we should be sure to succeed in our search upon them, however savage they might be. When St. Fulgentius, meditating flight into Egypt to escape the incursions of the Vandals, arrived at Syracuse, having conversed with Eulalius the bishop, he passed the sea into an island called the Isle of the Cyclops, in which he found a blessed hermit, Ruffinus, living in great austerity ‡. At present our research must be confined to woods and mountains, or at most the shore.

At the foot of a desert rock, at Cape Matapan, in Greece, Michaud found a hermitage, and he takes occasion to observe, that Piety, which flies from the troubles and vicissitudes of life, is pleased at contemplating the stormy seas, and the asperity of solitary mountains. Elsewhere, during his travels, where his countrymen

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* Annal. Camald. lib. xxxvii. † Id. iv.

‡ Sicilia Sacra, i. 592.

were living, he says he was struck with the melancholy fact, that in modern times corruption and solitude are united, and that the very sacred spots which were formerly reserved for the devotion of hermits are now soiled by some seductive spells and pleasures vain *.

In the middle ages there were few places peculiarly remarkable for natural beauty, for the repose of a sublime solitude, in which one was not sure to find a hermit, who often served the pilgrim as his guide, or gave him warning in such words as, "The sun hastes and evening comes. Delay not, while there is nought to hinder, down this rock thy safe descent; for it is so steep that nimblest steps to tread it are required. Ere the western sky is hung with blackness, strive ye for the pass." An ancient forest of chesnuts, whose huge gnarled intertwining trunks might so easily be converted into a cell, under the dark curtain of their foliage casting heavy shades, or the side of any mountain near the rills that glitter down the grassy slopes, making fresh and soft the banks through which they glide into the forest lower down, were sites which well suited him. Thus on Mount Ezel, where St. Meinrad led an eremitical life in the ninth century, I found, while thunder roared, one night a hermit at his prayers; and until the revolution there was always a succession of such men upon Mount Valerian on the Seine, which commands that beautiful view over the forest of St. Germain and the French capital, on which three crosses stood, which had been erected in the thirteenth century. In the reign of Charles VI., Anthony, a solitary hermit, lived on this mount; for whom Gerson, Chancellor of the church of Paris, prescribed a plan of life, which begins with these words: "Johannes Cancellarius indignus Ecclesiæ Parisiensis Antonio Recluso in Monte Val, fructum eremicolæ solitudinis adipisci." In 1556 Guillemette Faussart became a recluse on this mountain, where she built a little chapel with the alms of Henry Guyof and of Gilles Martine. While this was building, every night, after her prayers, she used to go down to the river and carry up as much water as served the masons for the whole of the next day. She closed her penitential life in 1561 at the end of five years. After her death, John de

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* Correspondence d'Orient, 41.

Houssai came here to be a hermit in her cell, having received the habit from the Carthusians. He lived chiefly upon roots and bread and water, rarely eating eggs or fish: his whole time was spent in prayer and reading, and in consoling such persons as came to him with permission from the Bishop of Paris, or from the Penitentiary. He slept in his white robe; and there he lived during forty-six years, excepting for an interval, on the occasion of the civil wars, when, being troubled by the armed men, he retired to the college of Montaigu at Paris, among the poor scholars. He died in his 70th year in the year 1609, and was buried near sister Guillemette on the mountain, in presence of the clergy and of many great lords. He was honoured during his life, and frequently visited by the Kings Henri III. and Henri IV., to whom it is said that he even predicted the manner of their death. The inhabitants of Surenne and the neighbouring villages used to have recourse to him in public calamities, and beg his intercession. In 1574 Thomas Guygadon, a native of Morlaix in Brittany, obtained leave to inhabit the cell of this holy hermit; and after him Pierre de Blois lived there fifty-one years and two months, till his death in 1639. In 1638, brother John le Comte, native of Mans, died on this mountain, after having lived there as a hermit during forty years. Seraphim de la Noüe, having taken the habit of a hermit in Italy, in the bishopric of Viterbo, came here, and was supported by the alms of Queen Marguerite de Valois. In the middle of the seventeenth century the hermits on this mountain formed a community, which existed till the revolution. They had all one superior, who was to examine their vocations to an eremitical life, and without whose consent they could do nothing extraordinary. They fed upon vegetables, worked to till the ground, maintained silence, and prayed often. They had each a separate cell and a common chapel, in which mass was daily said. They were laymen, who took no vows. The last of these hermits whose name is recorded was Nicolas de la Boissiere, who had exercised the profession of a surgeon *.

Who has not heard of the hermits of Mont Serrat? Let me record a narrative respecting these rocks, which I

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* Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, vii. 129.

should not have repeated if the venerable and learned traveller from whose lips I heard it had been living still; but now, without offence, I may the name of Chevalier with the rest enrol. He had visited them shortly after the revolution, and, on my questioning him respecting their picturesque beauty, for that benign old man condescended often to converse with me, he replied as follows: "I knew them well; for I once spent fifteen days and nights in the cell of the hermit, which is on the highest peak of the saw'd rock, for the purpose of making trigonometrical observations, by order of the French government. Two months before I arrived, the hermit who had inhabited that cell was murdered by a man, who mounted up the front of the rock, grappling each splinter as he pushed from crag to crag. His books of devotion, his crucifix, a skull, and his wooden bedstead, were all still preserved there with religious respect. At that time there were twelve hermits living on the mountain, the nearest of whose cells was at a quarter of a league from mine lower down. Some of these hermits had been officers in the cavalry of Spain, and others were priests. They all seemed to me to be men of ascetic devotion, profoundly convinced of the vanity of human things, and yet nothing could be more sweet and gentle than their manners. But they were only reviving here; for we can still read in the Moniteur, during the previous war, how the French soldiers had seized the hermits, and hurled them from the rocks, in places where the noise made by their reaching the ground could not be heard. That was now partly forgotten; other hermits had supplied their place, and only the late murder had left one cell deserted. I put my mattress on the very planks which had served him for his bed. As the observations were made in the night by means of concentrated lamps, I used to go down in the day, and spend my time on the roads and in the fields adjacent; and I used often to converse with the peasants in their dialect without their discovering who I was. What devil is that on the rock's point, whose flame we see every night? I used sometimes to say to them, 'What is he doing?' 'No good, seignior; no good. It is a preparation for fresh wars, and the next time we shall not escape.' In fact, the atrocities of the French soldiers had been horrible: they used to fasten the Spaniards to the trees, and then set fire to them. I was sometimes alarmed for my own safety; but the curate of the parish, who was an excellent and a learned man, gave me confidence. Upon my asking him whether he had ever heard his parishioners threaten me, he said that some had used high words, but that he had preached a sermon to them in my behalf, telling them that I was there only for the interests of navigation and commerce, which was for the good of all men; and that I was myself a good Christian, and that every day I used to assist at his mass. The brave peasants afterwards used to come to my cell and bring me game, for which they would take no payment. I used to amuse myself on the mountain with botanical researches. For one reduced like me now to lean upon a staff, that were no ground. Often, with breath exhausted from my lungs, I could no further mount, but did seat me. The life I led there was something paradisiacal; and even now, at this distance of time, its remembrance sweetens my old age, as my grey hairs are descending in bitterness to my grave."

The crags and splinters of the rocks that surround abbeys, along which one coasts as a man walks near the battlements on a narrow wall, are generally associated with the memory of hermits, though to reach them feet avail not without help of hands. At Vallombrosa I saw the chasm in the hard stone where a hermit had made his bed for forty years; and when I visited the abbey of St. Maurice, in the Valais, I was directed to visit the hermit who lived in a cavern on the side of the precipice which adjoins that house. Rugged was the rock, and steep; a path not easy for the clambering goat to mount. There I found that old man, hoary white with age, blind but cheerful. He refused to cover his head with his cowl, though it was the season when the sun least veils his face, and the fly gives way to the shrill gnat; and on my urging him, he replied, as if he saw, saying, "Since a youth has not declined enduring the fierce heat to ascend my scorching rock, I at least, a poor old man, long withered, need not fear it." Near Fribourg, in the rocks which overhang the river Sane, cut out of the cliff, a suite of solemn rooms, through which its dark waves resound loud roaring, so as to stun the ear, still recalls the hermit who once inhabited them. His hands had wrought them. It was with some difficulty that I waded across that bellowing stream, which in 1708 proved fatal to some poor scholars who were passing it in a boat, on the festival of St. Antony, intending to visit the hermit. In the chain of Apennines, through which you travel going from Piceno into Umbria, there is a wooded valley, having Sentino Nova on the right and Fabriano on the left, which is shut in with vast rocks, from which a river falls precipitously, causing a murmur of waters to complete the charm of that vale. Beneath the rock there is a cavern, which was a den of wolves, where they used to bring forth and rear their young; so that the valley received from the country people the name of Pascilupi; and there dwelt some hermits, to whom fled for refuge the first friars, who revived the habit and the life of blessed Francis; for this desert of Pascilupi was accessible only by one path, and that most steep and rough; so that the tumult of men seemed completely cut off here, as if to verify the promise, "Abscondes eos in abscondito faciei tuæ et conturbatione hominum *."

The Creator of the world seemed to have provided such shelter expressly for the hermit; and such men loved it with a poet's love. "There is a cave," says one, who would have lived happier in such a dwelling,

"All overgrown with trailing odorous plants,
Which curtain out the day with leaves and flowers;
And there is heard the ever-moving air,
Whispering without from tree to tree; and birds,
And bees: and all around are mossy seats;
And the rough walls are clothed with long soft grass—
A simple dwelling, which shall be our own;
Where we will search
For hidden thoughts, each lovelier than the last;
——————— and, like lutes
Touched by the skill of the enamoured wind,
Weaves harmonies divine, yet ever new,
From difference sweet, where discord cannot be."

Such were those caves on the mountain over Parma, in Calabria, of which the entrance is so covered with aromatic plants, where blessed Helias, Abbot, and St. Nilus, lived a solitary life †.

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* Annal. Capucinorum, 1526.

† Gabrielis Barrii de Antiq. et Situ Calabriæ, ii. Thes. Antiq. It. ix.

Arriving at the noon-tide hour, where one of these old caverns seems yet to keep the moonlight of the expired night asleep, through which the awakened day can never enter, the traveller of the middle ages often found at the entrance sitting its inhabitant, the hermit. Thus on the mountain of Bruncaberg, near Holmes, in Denmark, there was a great cavern, in which hermits used to live who gave salutary advice to persons passing out of the city [*]. After all, however, there can be no certain clue to guide us; for often hermits had no fixed residence. Marinus had probably no certain seat at first, but, like the ancient anachorites, went here and there either to avoid the multitude, or in quest of the necessaries of life. It was not till later that he and St. Romuald made themselves a hermitage in the island of St. Michael, near Venice [†]. Through this ancient forest then, whose thick shade with lively greenness the new-springing day attempers, let us roam and search its limits round. Here, when we least expect it, the hermits may come suddenly upon us; as those of Camaldoli appeared once to me, descending from their desert to the monastery to hold a chapter there. I shall never forget how all my sense in ravishment was lost, on beholding them emerge from amongst the rocks in the dark pine forest in which I was wandering. Their long white habits, flowing beards, and sweet calm countenances, with eyes bent downward, formed such a picture amidst the crags and trees as Titian and Zurbaran never traced. I stood immoveable, and I believe should have fallen on my knees, but for the suddenness of the vision, which, ere I could collect my thoughts, was past.

Count Roger, hunting in the desert of Squillace, in Calabria, experienced amaze like mine. His dogs barked at the entrance of a cave; and within it he discovered Bruno, the son of a noble house of Cologne, whom the love of solitude had conducted there, after spending his youth in the schools of Paris. In the year 1117, some boatmen on the river Athesis, penetrating into a certain wood called Saltutius, near Verona, discovered a hermit who had lived there unknown in solitude twenty years.

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[*] Olai Magni Septent. Hist. ix. 11.

[†] Annal. Camald. i. 33.

He was a German, named Gualfardus, who in 1097 left his native town of Augsbourg, and had travelled to Italy. These boatmen led him into the city, where he was received into the monastery of the Holy Saviour in Curteregia *.

Milton met a hermit when he was travelling from Rome to Naples, and he is obliged to record the service he rendered him in introducing him to John Baptiste Manso, Marquis of Villa, to whom Tasso addressed his book on friendship †.

But now, supposing ourselves in presence of the hermit, let us with due reverence salute the man of holy solitude, who makes the forest thronged with visitants. In his visage glows a benign joy and a paternal love, which may embolden the most diffident to accost him. He will forgive our curiosity if we enquire who he is, and what has induced him to embrace so extraordinary a mode of life. Let us meekly intreat him to reveal it, though we cannot always reckon upon obtaining a satisfactory reply; for some kept their secret.

The convertite of Classe, who excited Romulus to become a hermit, when he used to converse with him while he was doing penance in that monastery, is called by the ancient writers "the blessed unknown;" and always addressed with the title, Beati incogniti ‡.

Brother Ulrich was a hermit in Switzerland, of great renown, and no one could relate who he was or whence he came. All that was known respecting him was his first coming to the wood in the year 1473. He appeared then to be a rich nobleman, about fifty years of age, who travelled with five horses, and came to Unterwalden, in order to see the hermit, Nicholas Von de Flue, of whom he had heard much. The conversation of the blessed man made such an impression on him, that he resolved on the spot to remain all the rest of his days in the wilderness, and to follow him. Nicholas, after proving him a long time, gave him a small house, not far from the chapel at Ranft, where he might serve the priest's mass, and give an answer to the pilgrims. He passed under the name of Brother Ulrich, and led a most holy life,

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* Annal. Camald. lib. 23.

† Second Defence of the People of England.

‡ Annal. Camald. lib. ii. 56.

following the instructions of Nicholas. Afterwards he inhabited a wooden cell in the forest, wearing a brown habit, and beads at his girdle, and walking bare-footed. In 1486 he made a pilgrimage to Rome, to visit the holy places, in company with Lucas Kölblin, the priest of Muthathal; and though he soon returned, it was only in time to find his brother hermit, Nicholas, at the extremity, and to close his eyes. He followed him upon the feast of Corpus Christi, and was buried with great mourning in a side chapel in the church at Kerns. The inscription on the stone was,

"Here lies Brother Ulrich, who died blessed,
in the year 1491."

No one ever knew his origin or family: some in modern times suppose that he was a Bavarian, from Munich, others a Suabian from Memmingen [*]. He was not the only one unknown among those who followed the instruction of this hermit: another was the holy recluse virgin Cæcilia, whose family name was never discovered. She inhabited a lonesome dwelling in the wood, a quarter of a league from Ranft, and near the chapel of brother Ulrich, where she led such an angelic life, that all the country was amazed. She died in the year 1565, at the age of more than a hundred, having survived Nicolaus seventy-eight years. She also was buried at Kerns, and many miracles were wrought through her intercession.

Suatocope, King of Bohemia, having been vanquished by the Emperor Arnulph, retired into a desert, where he passed the rest of his days with some hermits, who never knew who he had been until the hour before his death, when he informed them that he had been a king, and that he had never found true happiness until he had joined their society [†].

However, in the Chronicles of the middle ages we find frequent mention of hermits, whose life and conversion were no secret. Some, like the last, had been sons of kings, who had exchanged their jewels for a set of beads, their gorgeous palace for a hermitage. The blessed Josse was son of Judicael, King of Brittany, and brother of another king. Being sought for to be made king, he set out on a pilgrimage to Rome, with eleven others, after giving up his studies in the convent of Lanmelmon. Seven years after, he served God in the hermitage of Braïc, on the river Quantia, where he lived on birds and little fish. With his own hands he built in the forest two oratories of wood, enriching them with the relics which he had brought from Rome *.

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[*] Leben und Geschichte des Nikol. By Weissenbach, 271.

[†] Ord. Vit.

Many hermits in the middle ages had been great noblemen. In 1166, St. William, Duc de Guyenne and Count of Poitiers, retired to a hermitage, where he lived many years, till his death. His body was interred in a little garden, which he used to cultivate, and an oratory was afterwards erected over the spot. Guido, of the noble family of the Gherardesca, Count of Donoraticus, in the fortieth year of his age, through the love of Christ, became a hermit in the desert of Camaldoli. Dying there in 1140, all the bells of his former domains are said to have tolled, as Nicholas Brautius Sarsinas records in his poetical martyrology,

> "Vasta virum clarum vivum celavit eremus,
> Defunctum sanctum cymbala sacra sonant.†"

Some anachorites, as in the first ages of the church, had been distinguished in the world by their crimes, for which they now were doing penance, but in a spirit very unlike that of Athæmenes, son of Catreus, King of Crete, of whom we read that having ignorantly slain his father, according to the predictions of an oracle, he fell into despair, and not being able to endure to meet men, or support their presence, turned aside and gave himself up to the desert, wandering alone until he died through grief ‡. The Christian penitent in solitude had peace, being ever fed with kindly hope.

Francis Sichichi, a youth, had been a celebrated assassin. Having cut off with a sword the arm of Leonard Cannizarius, his fellow townsman, he was punished with torture and prison. Thus his heart was changed; so assuming a hermit's dress, he inhabited a

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* Orderic. Vit. lib. iii.

† Annal. Camald. lib. xxv.

‡ Diodorus.

cave on the mountains, near the monastery of St. Mary de Bosco, in Sicily, where in fasting and prayer, and other holy exercies, he lived a hermit, serving mass, and communicating daily in the monastery till his death, when he was buried as a friend of God in the town of Clusa *.

Hermits there were, however, men of strong affections, who embraced the life of solitude through a sinking of the mind from sorrow, and a faintness that could have no other end but death. They were men who sought to hide from the world's eye a grief so profound and tender, that only He who made the heart could sympathize with its sufferings. Spenser describes one of these as being so daunted, that no joy

> " In all his life, which afterwards he had,
> He ever tasted, but with penaunce sad
> And pensive sorrow pind and wore away;
> Ne ever laught, ne once shew'd countenance glad,
> But alwaie wept and wailed night and day:
> Unto those woods he turned backe againe
> And finding there fit solitary place
> For wofull wight, chose out a gloomy glade,
> Where hardly eye mote see bright heaven's face
> For mossy trees, which covered all with shade,
> And sad melancholy; there he his cabin made †."

Some of these hermits, of whom there are such charming pictures in the old romantic fabling of Spain, who used to shelter knights, as when the old recluse in the landes of Bordeaux received Elie, Count of Thoulouse, had themselves been knights. Such in later times was the celebrated Nicholas of the Rock, who had long been a soldier serving his country, but loving still more God, or as St. Jerome says, " sub habitu alterius alteri militabat ‡." He had been a perfect knight, defending widows and orphans, and all poor persons, preventing as far as he could, all plunder and excess, declaring that a soldier should be distinguished not more by courage than by mildness, and justice, and peace §. The Abbot Blasius, his contemporary, says, " he is indeed in our times a wonderful hermit, living in the desert, and having

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* Sicilia Sacra, ii. 890.

† iv. 7.

‡ Epist. 79.

§ Weissenbach.

fasted for twenty years: of whom more than a hundred thousand witnesses can speak, and not merely ordinary persons and his own countrymen, but pontiffs and princes, such as Popes Sixtus IV. and Innocent VIII., the Emperor Frederic III., Archduke Sigismond of Austria, the Bishop of Constance, and many others, so that posterity can never doubt respecting him. The Abbot Conrad von Wiblingen told me himself, that he had held a long conversation with him, and that the hermit in reply to his first salutation, " you are the man who has spent so many years without food," answered, " Good father, I have never said that I eat nothing." John Molinet, of Valenciennes, says in one of his works, " that he had seen one of the wonders of his times, the hermit Nicholas of the Rock." Bonifacius Simoneta, Abbot of Cornu, in Italy, another of his contemporaries, speaks also of having heard of his fasts; as does Cornelius Agrippa, saying, " this faculty of bearing hunger, is confirmed in our time, by the miraculous example of brother Nicholas, who has lived in the desert twenty-two years without food *." Petrus Canisius, who wrote shortly after his death, inserted him in his German Martyrology, and also wrote upon his gift of prayer. His portraits were multiplied through Switzerland, in imagery of every kind. The kings of France had the picture of this friend of God in their cabinets; the kings of Spain had it deposited in their archives; the Archduke Sigismond, of Austria, the Dukes of Savoy and Loraine, Philip IV. King of Spain, Louis XII. King of France, the Emperor Ferdinand III., and many other great princes, took occasion to manifest their respect and esteem for this poor hermit. St. Charles Borromeo came to Saxeln, and remained for two hours on his knees at the tomb. Even the heretics of that age were awed by his austerity. Luther, in a letter to Paulus Speratus, mentioned the vision of the holy Trinity, which had been vouchsafed to this hermit, and added that he held him for an especial friend of God, entrusted with divine secrets. Within a short walk of Stantz, there is a deep narrow vale, richly wooded, through which a torrent bellows. At an enchanting spot upon the bank, is a small dwelling constructed with the brown walnut

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* Corn. Agrip. de Occult. Phil. i. 58.

planks of the country, and roofed rudely with wood and stones. Here did he live. This is his hermitage, still visited with such religious respect. In the rooms one can hardly stand upright; but from the bed on which he lay, the sylvan view is so delightful, that one might envy such a lodging. The door faces the chapel and the stream; the back windows open on a sloping lawn, which rises from the wall: the mountain tops are seen only at intervals through the immense trees, which shadow all the valley. Whoso has seen the spot, will pardon my wishing to describe it.

In the hermit, too, one might sometimes have recognized the renowned philosopher of the schools, the curate, or the sire that once waved the crozier over a numerous flock.

When Abeillard left St. Denis, he became so disgusted with the society of men, that in imitation of St. Jerome, he retired with one clerk, into a desert place, which was near Nogent sur Seine. There was a deep wood; there was a rivulet, and there were wild fruits. There he built a little cell and a chapel, of wood and rushes, having obtained permission from the blessed Haton, Bishop of Troyes, who moreover gave him the ground to do with it what he chose. In the chapel, he set up a carved stone, to serve as a symbol of the blessed Trinity, so formed as to prove how Catholic was his doctrine on that head; a venerable monument of his faith, which was ever afterwards preserved in the Abbey of Paraclet, where, till the revolution, it might have been seen placed honourably in the choir of the nuns, on a marble pedestal, on which was an inscription, stating its origin. There spending his time in holy exercises and in study, he derived such consolation, that he gave the place the name of Paraclet, having been able to build a fairer chapel, which was dedicated to the Holy Spirit, to mark that God had consoled him. When the place of his retreat at length became known, a multitude of scholars flocked to him, entreating that he would permit them to live there under his direction, and after great difficulty they obtained his consent. Then each scholar made a little hut for himself on the brink of the stream, and there they lived on coarse bread and herbs, and drank only water, sleeping on straw. They rose with the sun, and went to rest at its setting, they began each day with prayer; then they sung the Psalms, and went to hear his lectures on theology, which he delivered under a tree. It was there that he composed his treatise on morals, "Know thyself," which after being lost for many years, was at length found in the Bodleian library. There were more than six hundred of these disciples living thus more like hermits, than students of philosophy. A larger church and additional buildings became necessary, which led some years later to the famous convent of Paraclet, in which Heloisa presided.

Parish priests became hermits through desire of peace. In 1196, Guy, the curate of Maincourt, in the diocese of Paris, gave up his charge and retired with some companions into a neighbouring wood, given to him by Guy de Levy *. To such a hermit, how true must have appeared the saying of Menander,

Ὡς ἡδὺ τῷ μισοῦντι τοὺς φαύλους τρόπους
Ἐρημία, καὶ τῷ μελετῶντι μηδὲ ἓν
Πονηρὸν, ἱκανὸν κτῆμ' ἀγρὸς τρέφων καλῶς.

In the transfer of property, it was often necessary to provide for the right of such men. We find Philippe-Auguste by an especial diploma, endowing the church of St. Evaste, near Orleans, with a little fief in the wood, which served as a retreat to a poor hermit; but the church was not to take possession of it till after the hermit's death, and then it was a condition that two priests should always live as hermits in this wood of oaks and birch †.

"There rests not far from this church of St. Martin," says St. Gregory of Tours, "a certain priest, John, a Briton by nation, who for the sake of the divine love, withdrew himself from the sight of men, and built a little cell and an oratory before the church of a certain village. There in a little garden which he cultivated with his own hand, he planted laurels and trees, which now are risen up to a vast height, affording the most delicious shade; under whose boughs the holy man used to sit, while he always read or wrote something. After his death, it happened that one of these trees decayed through age, and the person who had possession of the grove, dug it up by the roots, and made the trunk into a kind of seat, on which he used to take his rest when weary. Yet after two years he began to feel compunction for what he had done. " Woe is me!" he used to say, " because I have done wrong, in employing for such a purpose, as a common seat, a tree which had been planted by the very hands of such a priest!" So with these words he dug a hole in the ground, and placed the wood within it, and then covered it up. Strange to say, when the spring came back, and the other trees began to bud out leaves, this poor buried trunk sent forth new sprouts *.

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* Lebeuf, Hist. du Diocèse de Paris, viii. 54.

† Gall. Christiana, viii. 522.

Bishops, who often set an example in this respect, could not complain when priests retired thus. There is a village in the mountains of the Vosges, still called Bonhomme, from St. Dié, Bishop of Nevers, who led a hermit's life there †. St. Taurin, Bishop of Evreux, through love of heavenly contemplation, retired to a desert place, on the sea coast, near Coutance, where he built a cabin, and spent the rest of his days in the exercise of an austere life ‡. St. Loyer, Bishop of Séez, in the eighth century, some years before his death, resigned his episcopal functions, and returned to his original eremitical life. He died in his hermitage, and was buried in his little chapel, which became a parish church in after time §.

The Camaldolese hermits received many bishops amongst them. In their hermitage on the mountains of Tuscany, I saw the tomb of Cornelius Francis de Nelis, Bishop of Antwerp, who died in that retreat in 1798. Their annals commemorate the precious death of the hermit Bogumilus, in his solitude of Dobrowensis, in Poland, in 1189, who had been Archbishop of Gnesne. He abdicated in 1177, and continued here with a few hermits, dwelling in some poor huts ||. In general, however, if we enquire into the history of the hermits

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* Mirac. 23.

† Voyage Lit. de Deux Bén. 136.

‡ Hist. d'Evreux, 31.

§ De Maurey d'Orville, Recherches Hist. sur le Diocèse de Séez, 96.

|| Ann. Camald. lib. xxxiv.

whom we meet in the woods, we shall find that they had passed to that peace from long previous tranquillity in the cloister. The holy Amatus, after living for thirty years in the monastery of St. Maurice, in the Valais, led a most abstemious life on a solitary rock, to which a monk, Berinus, used to bring him food every third day. Valerius, a Spanish Abbot, in the time of Wamba, who wrote De vana sæculi sapientia, lived for a long time as a hermit in the Asturias *.

St. Hospitius, after building a monastery of St. Honoratus, at Lerins, erected also on the summit of the peninsula, three thousand paces from Nice, on the east shore, a tower not many paces separate from the monastery, in which he lived as a hermit, devoted to prayer and meditation, from which he used to address the people, predicting the coming of the Langobards. When these invaders approached, he caused all entrance to the tower to be closed up, leaving only a small window, through which he used to draw up food and necessaries. So when the Langobards arrived, they thought to find treasure here, and mounted by ladders to the window; but finding only this hermit covered with sackcloth and chains, they supposed him a malefactor. He lived shut up in the tower till the end of his life, ruling his monks by deputy †.

During the middle ages, it was not uncommon for men to set out on long journeys, with no other object but to visit some holy hermit, dwelling in the woods, or on the top of mountains, in order to adjure him to solve some knot which had involved their mind, or merely to listen to his hallowed words, and thus recover their tranquillity by witnessing a gleam of heaven in his peace; vainly sought for in most other breasts; for

"Only the waters which in perfect stillness lie,
Give back an undisturbed image of the sky ‡."

Thus in early times many learned Pagan philosophers and great physicians used to repair to the desert, in

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* Ant. Hispalens. Bibliothec. Hispana, lib. v. c. 7.

† Petri Jofredi Nicæa Civitas illustrata, Thesaur. Antiq. Ital. tom. ix.

‡ Trench.

order to take counsel of St. Anthony. St. Augustin addressed himself to Simplicius, a hermit, as did St. Bruno to another hermit. St. Malachy put himself under the direction of a holy hermit named Imar, who led an austere life in a cell, near the great church of Armagh. Albert von Bonstetten relates that a company of noble persons made a long journey out of Germany, in order to see and speak with the hermit Nicholas of the Rock, in the forests of Unterwalden, of whom fame had published so many wonders. The renowned Johannes Trithemius, Abbot of Spanheim, who had lived with him, mentions in his annals, that a vast concourse of foreigners used to repair to the hermitage of this holy man: and elsewhere, in his fifteenth homily on fasting, he says, " that he does not believe there is in all Germany any one who has not heard of this wonderful man; that all the pilgrims who went to Einsiedlin, made a point of turning out of their way to visit his lonely cell, which was at a distance of fourteen leagues from the road to the abbey; that none would ever be discouraged by the difficulty of that wild and rugged path, for all were of opinion that their pilgrimage would not be fulfilled, if they had not seen him; and that many persons celebrated for their learning, used to repair to Sachseln in order to converse with him."

England in earlier times had also her hermits, who used to attract a similar concourse of persons seeking to be edified. Thus during the thirteen years when blessed St. Cuthbert was leading an eremitical life on the borders of the Picts, great multitudes of people daily used to visit him. We read that by the providence and grace of God, never any one returned from him without great comfort. This caused both young and old to resort unto him, taking great pleasure both to see him and to hear him speak.

The life of hermits in our busy and prosaic age, appears to some as merely a poetic conception, without any view to reality or use; and that there is much of poesy in such a theme, no one can doubt. What pages more charming, more Homeric, than those of St. Jerome, where he relates the lives of St. Paul, the eremite, of St. Hilarion, and of the monk Malchus? What true simplicity of style, what wildness of incident, what inspiration of purity and innocence! But hermits were in the church not for decoration only. It is a characteristic of the ages of faith, that there should be no institution, however calculated to supply the poet with materials for his imagination, and the painter with visions for his pencil, which did not possess a deep practical utility to the church, and consequently to the world. A wise law had established all things, nor was there aught, as Dante says of Paradise,

> "That did not fit exactly, as the finger to the ring *."

It was not therefore without cause, or without fulfilling an object which no other instrument could have accomplished, that hermits, these solitary men who diffused such a charm to the scene of human life, were found succeeding each other in the Christian republic. We find from history, that in early times it was a frequent practice to visit the Fathers of the desert, in order to be edified by their replies. Thus we read of visitors approaching them, and saying, "Dic mihi verbum." Olympius answered on one of these occasions, "Sit not with heretics, and wherever you are, consider yourself a stranger †." Two philosophers came to question an aged hermit; but he returned no answer; until, after repeated remonstrances, he told them to think on death, and to learn to be silent ‡.

John Moschus relates that a certain old man once came to a solitary hermit, and said to him, "Tell me, brother, in the long course of your solitary life and spiritual exercise, what have you gained? To whom the hermit replied, 'Depart, and after ten days come back to me, and I will tell you.' The old man went his way and returned at the end of ten days, and found that the hermit had departed to Christ, and had left a tile, on which was written, 'Pardon me, O Father, because while I performed the work of God, or sang the psalmody of my Hours, I never suffered my mind to rest upon earth §.'" Thus the philosophy of the hermits in form of expression, to shun vain length of words, resembled the old Gnomic-practical wisdom of the first Greek sages and poets, conveyed in short, pithy sentences, or

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* xxxii.

† Sophron. Pratum Spirit. ii.

‡ Id. 156.

§ Prat. Spirit. c. 98.

mystic symbols. Doubtless many hermits were divinely inspired and fitted for their peculiar ministry. Trithemius says that he considered Nicholas of the rock another Antony, who, without reading or study, had been taught all wisdom by the Holy Spirit. "In the instruction of Christian morality," says this learned abbot, "he was a deep and efficacious counsellor, who held to the Gospel, and with word and work brought many persons from an evil to a better life *." Freely the sage, though wrapt in musings high, assumed the teacher's part, and mildly spoke to all. "This man of God," he adds, "was in our times a real wonder; for he had never studied, and could not even read, and yet had he a wondrous insight into the mysteries of the holy Scriptures, and would give answers to all questions of the learned, that would have implied the deepest wisdom and learning." The Chronicle of Nürnberg, by Johan Nauklerus, states that, "though his words were few, yet to all questions they were ever apt, and so full of comfort, that seldom any one departed from him without being edified. He was always cheerful and joyous, and ever the same, so that no one ever saw him with a sorrowful look." A pious pilgrim, who never disclosed his name, came to the holy man's cell, and held with him a long spiritual conversation. He broke out with the words, "How happy and blessed art thou, O Father Nicolaus!" but the hermit instantly, with an altered countenance, replied, "God alone can be called happy, but a time will come when men will introduce a new faith, and he who will resist this as a wall or a rock may then be pronounced happy." These remarkable words were produced in the evidence brought forward in the process of his beatification. The accustomed prayer of this holy hermit was, "O God, take me from myself, and give myself all to thee!" The wondrous things related of him might almost inspire with a kind of dread the timid stranger. Thus we read that the holy hermit having sent his fourth son to study at the University of Paris, a certain German student, the friend of this young man, was returning home, to whom he had given a letter to his father, which he lost on his road through Burgundy;

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* Annal. Hirsaugiens. 505.

still being most anxious to hear somewhat the holy man, though he knew not how he durst approach him after losing the letter, he continued on his way to Sachseln; and when he was not far from Ranft, the hermit, holding the lost letter in his hand, met him and saluted him most graciously, asking him whether he brought any other letter *.

The most secluded hermits had some who followed their instructions. Angelus Gualdensis hid himself at last wholly in his cell, and never went out; but we read that the people of the neighbouring towns and villages came in numbers to receive counsel from him in his desert. Through a little window he used to receive the bread and other provisions which they offered to him, and he gave them his benediction, and used to speak salutary words to them, as they stood without, that they might be induced to seek eternal life and peace †. Indeed, by the rules of their holy state, hermits were bound to study to assist all who came to them. "Piety," say the Camaldulese, "is essential to a solitary hermit, that he may be humane, benignant, merciful, and mild. Piety is a benignant affection of heart, condescending humanely and mercifully to the infirmity of others ‡." How kind and gracious is their salutation of the stranger, "Wherefore delay, young traveller, in such a mournful place? Art thou wayworn, or canst not further trace the path?" He was often, truly, in a two-fold sense, wayworn; and that benevolent sire often knew his meaning better than he could speak it. Instinctively men fled to them for refuge; as in the beautiful narrative which tells of the noble youth of the princely house of Beneventum, who, when his father was slain by the Normans, stole away to the woods and repaired by night to the solitary hermit Santarus, with whom he remained till he embraced the monastic life, being first received into the monastery of Sancta Sophia at Beneventum, where the Abbot Gregory caused him to exchange his name Dauferius for that of Desiderius, to express how all loved him, and afterwards elected Abbot of Mount Cas-

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* Leben und Geschichte des S. Nikolaus von Flue, p. 144.

† Annal. Camald. lib. xlvi.

‡ Ibid. lib. xxxi.

sino, whence he passed to occupy the chair of Peter as Pope Victor III.* But it was not always a holy innocent who knocked at the hermit's wicket.

What a scene must it have been when the terrible Merovingian kings used to penetrate into the forests to see these peaceful men of solitude and prayer! St. Eusice, a monk of Micy near Orleans, retired to a hermitage in the country of Blois, and St. Gregory of Tours relates that Childebert, King of France, before setting out on the war in Spain, visited him in his retreat, and offered him 500 golden crowns, which he refused. After the death of this hermit, the king, who ascribed the success of that war to his prayers, caused a church to be built on the spot where he had died; and by degrees houses being built round it, the town of Selles or Cells was the result †.

In the sixth century St. Victor retired into a solitary wood near the village of St. Saturnin in the diocese of Troyes; but the fame of his sanctity rendered him the object of love and respect to the nobles and people of that country, who admired in him the grace of Jesus Christ. It happened one day that the king of France, with his train of courtiers, and many gentlemen of the country, followed by hunting servants, came into that wood, riding along the banks of the river Aulbe, for the sake of hunting. The king, hearing that they were near the retreat of a holy anachorite, whom every one spoke of with great reverence, became anxious to know him; and so the whole company turned aside and rode towards his cell. The king was overjoyed at the thought of finding such a holy man in his little hermitage; but the saint came out on their approach and met them. The king seeing him advance, quickened his pace, embraced him, and gave him the kiss of peace. "What, my holy Father and priest, are you thus retired from the world in penitence? It is I who should do this, and not you, who are so good a man; but I beseech you pray God that He pardon me my sins." "Sire," replied the hermit, "it is my obligation to pray for you, that God may bless you and your family and kingdom, giving you His Holy Spirit, and a prudent counsel, that you may govern with wisdom and justice. Sire, in this word every thing is comprised: but now may it please you to step into the cell of this poor sinner, and take a little refreshment?" "Ouy Dea," said the king, "and it will be a great happiness to me." So the saint called his boy to bring some wine, and the king entered and was refreshed *.

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* Chronic. S. Monast. Casinens. lib. iii. 2. 5.

† Bernier, Hist. de Blois, 241.

But they had more perilous visitors. Outlaws and robbers would sometimes repair to the hermit, seeking some assuagement of remorse. Many horrible tales from wretches who came to him for secret parley, who seemed hastening each step to the nether hell, the anchorite in desert places has endured. He, as one who listens, stood attentive, ruminating on the words which perhaps imported worse than might be uttered in their mutilated speech. If from answer he abstained, it was that his thought was occupied intent upon their error. When they were withdrawn from sight, his sense reviving, that had drooped with pity for the kindred creature, he would prostrate himself before his altar, and spend that whole night in prayer. These prayers of the recluse were those of the violent, who can by force take heaven. What might they not accomplish? St. Augustin appeals to their effects as proving the utility of the eremitical life. "These hermits," he says, "inhabit desert places, enjoying conversation with God, to whom they adhere with pure minds, most blessed in the contemplation of His beauty, which cannot be perceived unless by the intellect of the holy. They seem to some to have deserted human things more than was expedient, not understanding of what use to us is their mind in prayer, and how profitable as an example is the life of those whose bodies we are not able to behold †." Frederic Barbarossa, being told that the hermits of Camaldoli led a contemplative life in their cells, and offered prayers continually for the safety of the emperor and all men, sent a charge in 1164 to all the subjects of his empire, to respect their goods and possessions, and to preserve them from being oppressed ‡.

In estimating the use of such men, we must take into account also the extraordinary and prodigious power with

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* Desguerrois, Hist. du Diocèse de Troyes, 122.

† De Moribus Eccles. Cath. lib. i. 31.

‡ Annal. Camald. lib. xxxi.

which their words were invested when they exercised their pacific ministry, proclaiming in mortal ears the mysteries of heaven, with an authority almost visibly celestial. The old historians, speaking of the hermit St. Meinrad, who used to instruct the pilgrims who came to him, in the mysteries of the hidden life of Christ, and form them to sanctity, find no words so apt to describe his ministry as those of the Gospel, and say that he was the voice of one crying in the wilderness, "Prepare ye the way of the Lord *." No power, no authority could intimidate the hermit of the middle ages, or prevent him from denouncing evil with the force of that pure eloquence which brought to honour all who marked it well.

King Charles VI., returning from Languedoc, was accosted by an anachorite, who, with raised finger, bidding him take heed, proceeded freely and in great detail to expose the vices of the administration of his uncle: and the king listened to him patiently. But it was not only those who rule kingdoms, who might need the anachorite's reproof. There was another difficulty incident to the Church, which such men, perhaps, only could avert. For occasions might arise when the shepherd of the Church, amid the tangled labyrinth of civil broils, would lack a voice from the desert, to enable him to guide well the sheep and lambs. He who represents in synod high of ancient counsellors, under the Son of Mary, and of God, him to whom the keys were given first, in order to keep the bark in deep sea helmed to right point, riding triumphant through the shock of wars, might need confronting with one who had long taken his stand apart, who would not suffer any mind to subtilize with his, who so loved truth as to have left for its sake all the multitude admires; who ever in thought dwelt in Nazareth, where Gabriel opened his wings. The pontiff therefore might require the hermit. Then let the Vatican throw wide her gates, while kings and their ambassadors, frustrated in their sinister ends, shall be excluded, use what arts they may. It is the poor solitary wanderer through desert wilds whose sentence is to judge them. Let none attempt to bar his passage: he has a purpose to fulfil, commissioned by transcendent wisdom. Nor will abjectness of heart weigh down his eyelids for being

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* Tschudi Einsied. Chronik.

by them despised; but boldly will he pursue his hard enterprize, and leave not a thought unspoken. And now whoever wishes to be present at this strange audience, may have his hope satisfied by hearing what Bartholomew de Neocastro thus records: but I premise that it is a scene at which only the faithful should be present, whose eyes are fully ripened in the flame of love. Avaunt all others! They can comprehend it not. "When it was proposed to the Pope," says this old historian, "by some unworthy counsellors that Sicily should be recovered by the seizure of certain towns, the advisers assuring him that the enterprize must succeed, and that it could be effected without effusion of blood, promising to accomplish it if only they were permitted to act in the name of the holy see; the pontiff replied, 'Friends, it is neither in your nor in our power to effect such things; but it is only for the Lord to do it, by whose permission all that has occurred has been done. Your project we esteem vain and impossible; nor doth a conversion of sinners please us, by which, what heaven forbid, an effusion of human blood should pollute the see of our holy mother, the Church. But we commit all things to the disposal of our Creator. Therefore depart, for it is by pious prayers that He can be bent to convert the Sicilian sinners to the grace of the Church and to peace.' Nevertheless, these counsellors did not desist from their undertaking. By their persuasion an armament was fitted out, and they advanced to the walls of Augusta, where the aged Pachius remained to defend the town for King James. When that hero demanded, 'Who are ye?' and received for answer, 'Brother, you see the standard of the Church, and, lo! the legate and the brother preachers who come for the salvation of the Sicilians,' he replied, 'We fear the holy Church, and as Christians revere it as our mistress and our mother; but as for pastors, who hate us without reason, through love of the French, we esteem them as our enemies. We believe that you are deceivers; for the arms of the Church are humility of head and the benediction of the holy cross. Therefore depart hence; for the angels of God, who love humanity and peace, will fight against you who bring war to a Christian people.' The Pope, however, had espoused the cause of the French in Sicily, and as the King of Arragon had still possession, the prospect for the people was full of danger. In this crisis, on the 18th of September, 1288, Divine Providence visited Father Jerome, a venerable hermit, who had chosen to serve Christ in great asperity of life on Mount Ætna; to whom, when sleeping by night, He sent an angel, who said to him, 'The Lord commands you to take the staff of your old age, and proceed to the city of Syon, and there say to the chief pontiff, The Lord of thunders commands you to meditate on your ways, and to follow the God of virtues, lest the fury of the Lord should fall on you:' and he heard thunder, and the groans of mourners, and he asked him, saying, 'What sounds are these?' and the angel said, 'I show you the rivers of blood which is shed on the earth, and the sheep which perish. That blood is shed contrary to the praise of God, and these sheep that cry cannot find their shepherd. Say to him that he must turn to the Lord, and not deny peace to those for whom the Lord shed his own blood.' And when the old man came to the city, he repaired to the Pope, pale and in lowly guise, and said to him, 'Father, I am to declare to you what the Lord commands: lead me into your secret chamber, that I may say to you what no other ears but yours may hear.' And when he had led him into it, he asked him, saying, 'Who and whence are you?' and he said, 'An hermit am I, and a Sicilian:' and the Pope said, 'Does the land of Sicily yield its fruit, and does pestilence abound? For the Sicilians obey not the commands of God; and I have besought the Lord that the rain and the dews may not fall upon it until they shall be converted from their perversity:' and he said, 'Father, if you reflect, you are not from God, for you are not with Him. If you were from God you would do what He did, for He made you his vicar to the children of men, but you keep not his commandments; and He being a good Father and the best Master, you are a wicked son and an evil disciple; for you do not the works of God. He loved the humble and the poor; you follow the proud: He preached peace, and gave it; you foment seditions and scandals, desolations and captivities: He loved the lives of men; you are a homicide, and cause groans and sorrows to the people of Christ. Therefore your prayers pass not the clouds. But Almighty God, looking down from on high, deserts not his Sicilians, but opens to them the treasures of his compassion and clemency, and saturates them with his graces. You know, father, that as often as arms have been taken up for the French, the invincible power of Christ has fought for the Sicilians. It is strange that having so often seen them conquer you should excite fresh efforts against them. When you shall come before the tribunal of Christ, what palm will you have to offer to God? Some fathers will have prudence, others humility, others mercy to the poor, but you, when you will stand in the sight of the Almighty, before his feet will flow rivers of blood, and swords will be moved by the face of your severity. Consider, father, that these are not the works of the Lord, who, putting on the robe of humility, suspended on the cross, washed away sins, and for the human deliverance endured death. Show, father, if you are from God, what black, what red standard you display for the people, as Christ; what pallid or white that you may vanquish the enemies of Christ, and save the just with an eternal redemption. Truly the Egyptians say, Cruel are to-day the rulers of the Church of Jesus Christ. But know that the providence of the pious Father, who holds the hearts of men in his hand, will renew his seat in the earth, where the Lord shall be glorified for ever; not in battles, not in camps: and the faithful people shall not perish from the face of the Lord. O how wonderful, how unsearchable, was the charity of the Lord God, who to redeem his servants delivered his only Son to death! Truly in all things you endeavour to destroy what He constructed. 'Convertere, Domine, convertere ad cor.' Make peace between discordant kings, and dispose all things that the Christian people may be saved.' The Pope hearing these words with astonishment and admiration, interrogated him a second time, saying, 'My son, is it long that you have been in the desert?' and he said, 'Father, it is nearly sixty years since I commenced the eremitical life:' and he said, 'Tell me, what is your life?' and he said, 'Father, since the day I entered the desert I have never left the cave of my prayers, unless for the sake of searching out wild herbs, or fruits of trees, and water for my sustenance. Thrice a week I eat only bread and drink only water; other days I eat fresh or dried fruits according to the season. I have a monk for my companion, who twice a-year begs bread for us both. The branches of trees support my bed, and from November till the end of April, while the cold lasts on Mount Ætna, I sleep on straw, and the skin of a bear covers these old limbs. Day and night I adore God on bended knees, and with tears I pray the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost for all the Christian people, that He may rule our holy mother the Church, that He may give peace to kings and to all people, that He may give us the fruits of the earth, and may not desert our pontiff. I sing Gloria in excelsis Deo, Credo in unum Deum, Sanctus, sanctus, and Agnus Dei. I say with honour that revered salutation of the glorious Virgin Mary which the archangel Gabriel said to her. I say thrice each day, 'Miserere mei Deus, et confiteor;' and not being a clerk, I say always, 'Pater noster.' This is my life, father, and my rite; and because I think that what my simplicity has said must have displeased you, I beseech you, father, pardon me if I have sinned.' The Pope, reflecting on all this, perceived that the hermit had been sent from heaven, and that the Holy Ghost spoke by the organ of the old man's simplicity. Then raising up his eyes to heaven, he wept, and after some space dismissed the old man benignly. Then he called the prelates and his counsellors, and after a solemn assembly he sent brother Raymund, a monk of Catalonia, to King James in Sicily, offering to the Sicilians the grace of the Church, and making him standard-bearer of the Church in the expedition which was to be directed to the defence of the Christians in the Holy Land. Shortly after he sent Benedict de Colonna and Gerard de Parma to arrange peace between the Apostolic See and the King of France on the one hand, and with Alphonso, King of Arragon, brother of King James of Sicily, on the other*."

Turning from this picture, copied faithfully from the life by a master's hand, we shall not be surprised to find these hermits addressing like words of admonition to the religious communities which their austere solitary lives had edified. Let us hear an instance recorded by Peter of Blois.

"In the year 1114," he says, "there slept in the Lord in the monastery of Evesham a venerable anachorite, St.

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* Bartol. de Neocastro, Hist. Sicilia, cap. 110—112, ap. Murat. Rer. It. Script. t. xiii.

Wulsinus, formerly a monk of Croyland, and in community with the chapter of Evesham, who, through dislike of the concourse of people to Croyland, and of his distractions at the time of the civil war between the sons of King Canute for the kingdom of England, transferred himself to Evesham, going all the way with a bandage over his eyes, lest he should behold vanity. The holy man coming into the chapel of St. Kenelm, which he had himself constructed in the seventy-fifth year of his retirement, spoke as follows to the assembled monks : 'My lords and dearest brethren in Christ, as well my venerable father and lord Maurice, as all my other fellow-soldiers in this monastery, let it not offend you that I who am a laic and illiterate should teach you who are so much more learned ; for I being so much older, and now at the very gates of death, am drawn by the bonds of charity to attempt to give salutary counsels to my youngers. Although, as you well know, I do not know letters, yet instructed in the book of long experience I know the commandments of God to be holy, I believe that mutual charity will be of great avail hereafter, I always teach patience in adversity, prudence in prosperity, I prescribe obedience, continence, I praise every good work, and I forbid all evil. And with you, my learned lords, it is of no consequence if the letters be written on goat-skin, or sheep or calf-skin, provided the doctrine of the letters be edifying and divine. So my fathers, as my learning is but simple and asinine, yet an ass carried our Lord into the holy city, and in so celebrated a triumph, God did not choose any other palfry. Thus those things which I have learned concerning the state of our monastery, from the experience of a long life, I have resolved to relate to you, seeing that I draw near the end of life, and that God being gracious to me, I may be admitted among our fellow-citizens the angels, where I hope you may all meet those who, for having well administered the mammon of injustice, may receive you into eternal habitations. I was born and educated in this country, but choosing banishment into a remote region for eternal life, I followed the circle of the rule of St. Benedict in the monastery of Croyland ; but being a laic, and less skilled in letters, and altogether unqualified for the choir of the monks, and being ignorant even of the ministry of Martha, with many prayers I obtained permission from the venerable abbot of that monastery, by name Britmer, to lead the life of an anachorite, which I had always desired; and there I shut myself up in a cell, and day and night I prayed to God for the negligences of that whole congregation and for my own sins. Often, while thus employed, I thought as if I were present in the heavenly choir, speaking with the heavenly citizens, and comforted by the sweetest revelations from God. And now, behold, in the troubles which then afflicted the whole land, videlicet, after the death of the great King Canute, between Harold and Hardicanute, as to which of them should be the greater and more worthy of the paternal sceptre, such was the concourse of terrified people who flocked to Croyland, and such was the crowd of native inhabitants, both men and women, who came upon me to consult me about their affairs, that there was as great a multitude of people daily sitting before the wicket of my poor hut as before the gates of a king's palace. Scarcely was I able to hasten over the divine office enjoined to me; scarcely could I hear one mass in the day; seldom, and not even in the night-time, could I observe my rule of silence: but I began daily to degenerate from ancient perfection, and, as if cast away from the face of the Lord, to be called the consoler of the poor, and now a most holy man. I should have sunk into the depths of evil, had not the Lord vouchsafed to send me the favour and counsels of Avicus, the prior of the monastery, who obtained leave for me to depart. With what tears I took leave of my holy abbot and of my other dear fellow monks, with what intimate sorrow I left that most beautiful place, is not now to be said; but at length departing, and coming hither, I have lived many years in this cell, a worthless and insignificant man, I confess, before the world as well as before God: nevertheless, perhaps, to the brethren, and neighbours, and people to whom I am known, considering my proportion, an example *.'"

But we must not linger here. The life and the discourse of hermits proclaimed a lesson which might be expressed in these two lines—

> "Nothing is true but love, nor aught of worth.
> Love is the incense that doth sweeten earth †."

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* Pet. Bles. Contin. ad Hist. Ingulphi in Rer. Ang. Script. i.
† Trench.

Thus we see what important purposes the hermits answered in the economy of the Church of God, " within the range of whose unerring bow all is as level with the destined aim as ever mark to arrow's point opposed *." And now if we accompany the hooded man back to his retreat, and remain with him after the visitors have all withdrawn, to observe him in his solitary hours in his leafy house in the woods, we shall find that there is yet much to learn which can yield mysterious views of the relations which are influenced by peace with God. For mark, what new subject of amaze! The hermit is at peace with creatures, and with universal nature: these trees, these birds, these reptiles, are all companions to him; the freshness of the morning air, the fragrance of flowers and plants, the solemn obscurity of the pine forest, the beauty of animals, wild to other men, all seemed to be the hermit's own by a peculiar affinity of a supernatural alliance. O how redolent of Paradise is this peaceful pre-eminence of man! and then on the morning of that blessed day with which each week begins in gladness, and when the mystery proclaims that there is no longer death, what an afflation of eternal bliss pervades him! Who can describe the peaceful joy of Sunday to hermits in the desert of Camaldoli, or to those who passed it in the woods with St. Francis, or amidst the perfumed rocks of Calabria with blessed Nilus, under the pure firmament, all roseate or azure, one deep and beautiful serene, prepared as if a vault to crown " the wondrous and angelic temple that hath for confine only light and love!" Heaven seemed open above such men, and their song to be " who doth not prune his wing to soar up thither, let him look from thence for tidings from the dumb †." Yet each day was bright and blessed; as it will ever be to all who follow their meek steps, though at a distance. Therefore the hermit would advise every man to go out from time to time alone into the woods or deserts, and sit down calmly, with flowers to smile about his feet, exchanging rooms and books for the clear air and sweet face of nature, to enjoy the sights and sounds which have such power to cheer and to restore the mind. " Yes, my son, make the trial," he would say, " become a hermit, if not for a year, and month, and day, like the knight in Ariosto, who vowed to pass that space like an

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* Dante, Par. viii.

† Id. Par. x.

anchorite in lowly cell, at least for one day. Unless you enter the forest as the demon came into Paradise, you will return from it a wiser and a gentler man; though you may begin with the frivolity of a child, solely attentive to the chirp and flutter of some single bird rustling in the brake, or to the game the busy mice may find among the withered leaves, or to the fairy circles on the grass, I shall not see cause to give up my hopes: only be still; caress the insects at your feet, for they have their little wants which a charitable hand may relieve; salute the birds as they alight near you, like blessed St. Francis; the play will end in reality; you will find what a new and marvellous felicity it is to feel at peace with all created things; you will love, you will see God."

Permit me, reader, to observe, that I, for one, have often sat alone in forests in France, Italy, and Germany, reclining on a mossy trunk, and though not skilled to trace the progeny of flowers, or to read nature with a scientific eye, always with fresh pleasure. How many little animals, never before remarked, have come forth to peep at me! how many strange, faint cries have then been audible! One cannot sit for an hour thus without observing something that seems new and admirable; how much store of this kind then must old hermits have treasured up who passed thirty and forty years in such a school? How intense must have been their rapture when this alliance with creatures entered even into their mystic visions! as when the old anchorite in the desert, falling into an ecstasy at the communion, saw two white doves with closed wings approach to drink from the chalice; to commemorate which dream the insignia of Camaldoli was adopted, which, in abbreviation, was borne by all its filial churches *. What an earnest of the future rest to issue out of this brief life, as many of the hermits did, while in the actual enjoyment of this universal peace without one tear being shed, but with all things smiling round them to the last! The poet seems to admire, but to tremble, thinking of their end; who thus—

——— "in forests dwelt, prepared to try
Privation's worst extremities, and die
With no one near, save the omnipresent God.

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* Annal. Cam. lib. xxxiii.

Verily, so to live was an awful choice—
A choice that wears the aspect of a doom;
But in the mould of mercy all is cast
For souls familiar with the eternal voice."

"I have read of no one," says Petrarch, "but Paul the first hermit, and Romuald, who concluded a life of solitude with a solitary end. Romuald, in his one hundred and twentieth year, perceiving that his last hour was come, ordered the brethren who were present to go out and return to him early the next morning, deceiving them by a pious fraud, that he who had served Christ solitarily might pass solitarily to Christ, unattended by men, but in the company of angels depart to eternal life." However, many hermits died thus. In the year 1000, John, who had been Archbishop of Ravenna before becoming a hermit, made a similar end, remote from human eye, near the monastery of St. Michael of Clusis; and in 1004 Venerius Tiburtinus, a disciple of Romuald, died in the same manner *. At Vallombrosa the death of the hermit who slept in the chasm of the rock for forty years was only known by the silence of his bell that morning. Thomasio de Costacciario, who lived for sixty-five years in a deep obscure wood and cavern, called after St. Jerome, on the mountain of Cacchi, in the second year of the fourteenth century, passed to Christ in solitude. So also died Adam, a monk of St. Justina of Padua, who had retired into the mountains of Venda, and constructed a cell for himself amidst vast rocks, where he lived with a certain soldier who, for the love of God, faithfully served him, but who died first. This was in the time of the emperor Frederic Barbarossa, who destroyed Milan. More than eighty years after this hermit's death his bones were found in a cavern, where he had laid them down ere he departed solitary. A church was afterwards erected on the spot, under the title of St. Michael, by Gerard Pomedella, Bishop of Padua, in 1169 †. In 714, when the Moors overran Spain, some nobles of Castille fled to the mountains of Asturia, and many knights of Aragon to the Pyrenæans, where a good man, named John, in a cave in a rock, called Penna, built a little hut, as if in the wilderness,

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* Annal. Camald. lib. xi.

† Id. lib. xxxi.

and dedicated it to St. John the Baptist, where he lived and ended his life in absolute solitude. Long after his death to this spot among the mountains came a certain good knight of Saragossa, by name Votus, while hunting a stag, who, piercing his way through the bushes, discovered the cell in which lay the body of the hermit, unburied, before the altar; and near it he found engraven, with an iron style, these words, "I, John, founder, and first inhabitant of this house, desiring to serve God as if in the wilderness, erected this chapel, and dedicated it to St. John the Baptist, in which I lived long, and now die to rest in the Lord." Votus, on deciphering the inscription, was moved to tears; giving thanks to God, he buried the hermit, returned to Saragossa, sold his goods, gave the price to the poor, and then, with his brother Felix, returned, and lived in great sanctity in this hermitage, multitudes flocking to them for counsel. It was by their advice that Garsias Ximenes was chosen general, who, at the head of not more than six hundred knights, gave many battles to the Moors, and at length rescued a great part of Navarre, restoring it to the Christian religion *. Whether it arose from their habits of long familiarity with all divine agencies, or from a particular inspiration of God, we cannot say; but the fact unquestionably is, that many hermits, so far from deprecating, desired this secret, solitary death. When St. Cuthbert felt that his end was approaching, he resolved to die in his beloved island of Farne, where he had been a hermit before being a bishop. As he stepped into the boat which was to carry him over, the monks, crowding around him, asked when he would re-visit his cathedral. When my corpse is brought to it, was his reply. This was soon after Christmas, and in about three weeks he was assailed by the illness which proved fatal. On the morning of that day the island was visited by Herefrid, Abbot of Lindisfarne, who desired to profit by his exhortations and benediction, but who, at his request, returned to the abbey. So fierce a storm raged during five days, that the passage was impossible. No sooner did the weather permit than the monks hastily put out to sea. They found him at the point of death, ready to get free without a witness.

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* Lucii Marinei de Rel. Hispan. lib. viii. 1.

But let us now hear what history can attest respecting this peace and close alliance, in which hermits lived, with all created things. Here then, reader, be assured is a wondrous page; and philosophers themselves have studied it. Cornelius Agrippa, in his books on occult philosophy, attempts to explain the phenomenon of which he assumes the fact as beyond dispute. "It is proved," he says, "by experience, that there is in the nature of man a certain dominating and restraining power; for, as Pliny observes, all animals have an instinctive fear of him: so that a tigress having seen a man, removes her cubs. This character is impressed on man by his Creator; similarly he has been given a character to cause him to be loved: which was seen when all creatures came to Adam to receive names from him; but after his prevarication he lost that dignity, though not wholly: but only in proportion to the grievousness of his sins does a man lose those divine characters, and become himself afraid of creatures—which Cain experienced, saying, 'Omnis qui inveniet me, occidet me;' for he feared beasts and demons, not men, who were then few. Formerly, many men who lived in innocence enjoyed this power; as did Samson, David, and Daniel, Elisha, Paul, and many anachorites, living in the desert, in caverns and woods, not fearing wild creatures, from the divine character being in part restored to them through their interior purification *." There is, in fact, no reasonable ground for doubting the truth of the early relations attesting the intercourse between hermits and the animals of the desert. However extraordinary these may now appear, they rest upon the testimony of eye-witnesses. It is true that some of them admit of a natural explanation, and present no great difficulty, as persons accustomed to watch those creatures will admit. Appion declares that he witnessed with his own eyes the scene between Androcles and the lion in the great circus; incredible as it must have appeared to men who only saw lions when assembled to be slaughtered before them six hundred at a time in the circus, while, as an interlude, their emperors displayed their skill by cutting off the heads of ostriches as they ran by them.

Goerres treats upon the marvellous power of holy men

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* De Occult. Phil. lib. iii. c. 40.

over the animal creation, attested by so many instances in which the force of sanctity could quell ferocious beasts. Pachomius, as Palladius relates, past a night in a cave into which two hyenas came after sunset, who licked him from head to foot without injuring him, and then went out, and left him in peace. An old hermit, Theon, travelling by night through the desert, was followed by many wild beasts; the tracks of buffaloes, gazelles, and wild asses, used to be found at his cell. Sulpitius and Cassianus visited a hermit twelve miles from the Nile on a desert mountain, whom they saw pluck some fruit from a palm tree and give it to a lion, who took it out of his hand and then went his way. The Abbot Paulus Helladius, during seven months, gave bread twice every day to a lion. The Abbot Pardus found a lion on his path going to drink, and the beast sprang over him without hurting him. Of Hilarion, Helenius, Didymus, and other holy fathers, similar instances are recorded *. Sophronius makes mention of one old hermit who used to live in the same cave with lions †. The Abbot Polichronius told of another old man who once returned to the Laura from the banks of the Jordan with two young lions in his cloak ‡. "In the monastery of Gerasimus," he says, "one mile from the Jordan, an old monk told us that the Abbot Gerasimus had once found a lion with a wounded foot, which he cured, and the lion ever after followed him. In the service of that monastery there was an ass, and when this ass used to go to feed on the banks of the Jordan the lion would always go with him. One day while there, a camel-driver from Arabia seized the ass and drove him off. The lion returned alone to the monastery. The abbot thought that the lion had killed him, and asked him, saying, 'Where is the ass?' The lion stood looking back. The old man said, 'You have eaten him. Well, whatever the ass used to do, you must now do;' and, in fact, from that day the lion used to bear the water-vessels to the monastery. After some time the lion met the ass and the camel-driver returning. The man fled, and the lion brought back the ass to the abbot. It is said, that on the abbot's death the lion lay

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* Vita S. Ant. Mag. Paladii Hist. Lauriaca, Goerres die Christliche Mystik. i. 202.

† Prat. Spirituale, ii.

‡ Id. 18.

down over his grave, and would eat nothing, but pined away and died *." The universality of the attestations to the familiarity between hermits and the creatures around them would be inexplicable if we were to reject them all as incredible; and it is worthy of remark, that experience seems still to confirm the fact: for, in India, as I have often heard the Venerable Abbé Du Bois remark, after a residence of thirty-two years in that region, no catholic missionary has ever been wounded by a tiger or stung by a serpent during a space of more than three-hundred years, though they are more exposed than other men, as they pass continually through the most dangerous parts unprotected. However, all through the long interval of the middle ages we have testimonies presented from time to time to prove the continuance of the same intercourse in all parts of Europe between creatures and these pacific men. Let us hear a few of them as they may occur.

Orderic Vitalis relates, that Roger de Haute-Rive, retiring into the desert of Hendricourt, built an oratory there with the branches of trees, and that he has often heard him say, that during the night while he sung matins in this chapel of boughs, a wolf used to come near peaceably and respond, as it were, to his psalmody by its moans †. Notker Labeo, the learned monk of St. Gall, before his death, made a public confession, as if of a great sin, that he had once in the cloistral habit killed a wolf. Bede relates that the marine animals used to fawn upon St. Cuthbert while he prayed alone by night upon his desert isle ‡. Brother Baitheneus proposing to navigate from Iona to the Isle of Ethica, it was told him that a whale of immense size had been seen that night rising out of the sea between the two islands; but he replied, "I and that animal are under the dominion of God." "Go then in peace," said Columba; "thy faith in Christ will defend thee." Then Baitheneus having received the saint's blessing, put out to sea. Before they had gone far, lo, the whale rose up near them. The sailors were terrified, but he preserved the utmost tranquillity. Raising up both hands, he blessed the whale, and the same moment that monster dived under the

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* Cap. cvii.

† Lib. iii.

‡ Beda de S. Cuth. ap. Canisii Lect. Antiq. ii.

waters and appeared no more *. St. Aventine, in the time of Clovis, having left his country of Aquitaine and travelled to Troyes, was recognized there as an eminent servant of God, and received by the bishop, St. Camelien, into the common house of the clergy, but at length he begged permission to retire into some solitude as a hermit; so leaving the city he found a little fountain at the foot of a desert chapel, and there he raised a hut, and lived like an angel, till the people came to him in such numbers that he left it, and retired into an island in the Seine, about two leagues from Troyes, where the Oze flows into it; and there he made a cell of oziers, and passed his time in prayer and studying the Holy Scriptures. Being afterwards ordained priest, he used to celebrate the divine mysteries with great devotion; he lived upon coarse bread and roots, and drank only water. The Oze was but a rivulet, so that his cell was exposed to attacks from wild beasts. Once, in the silence of the night, a bear came to the door and made the most horrible cries, dashing its head against the planks, and seeming resolved to break in. The man of God betook himself to prayer, and besought deliverance from this poor beast that was become so furious. At break of day he opened his wicket, and there he found the bear lying down quite weak and gentle, and licking one of its paws. Then he observed that a great thorn had pierced it; so he took it and drew out the splinter, and the beast showed no desire to hurt him, but retired into the forest and was seen no more. Another time a deer, pursued by hounds, took refuge in his cell, and he kept it till the danger was passed. Another time while St. Aventin had a monk living with him, this brother went to the river-side and caught some fish, which he brought back alive, thinking to relieve the austerity of his fare; but who does not admire the benignity and simplicity of this friend of God? he took them into his hands and threw them back into the river, saying, "Go, little creatures, return to your element and aliment in full liberty to live there; for my element and aliment are Jesus Christ, to whom I wish also to return, that in Him I may live for ever." "We may learn from this holy man," says the writer, "many noble virtues: as the spirit of retreat from

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* Adamnani Scoti de S. Columb. ap. Id. i.

the world; the avoidance of vain glory; the care of souls; the assistance of captives; alms to the poor; and benignity to poor animals." On the spot of his first retreat the Bishop of Troyes built a little church, which is now the parish of St. Aventin within the walls of Troyes, as the city has been so much enlarged since then *. We find many beautiful instances recorded of this affection for the common animals, with which their solitary life brought hermits into intercourse; which was free from all mixture of that absurd sensibility of the ancient philosophers, who, like Hortensius, would weep and put on mourning for the death of a mullet; while, at the same time, as we read of others, they would have no scruple in throwing their servants into their fish-ponds to fatten their fish, as a punishment for breaking a plate while they were entertaining Augustus. "Turning to creatures," says St. Bonaventura, "is not a sin, if there be not a turning away from God. We can be delighted without sin in creatures, as when we are pleased at remarking their beauty; and we can be delighted with them meritoriously when that beauty is referred to God, as the Psalmist says, 'Delectasti me, Domine, in factura tua †.'" All beautiful things, said the hermits, bear witness that God is most beautiful; all sweet things, that He is most sweet; and so of the rest. In the greatness of creatures is seen the power of the Father; in their disposition the wisdom of the Son; in their beauty the goodness of the Holy Ghost ‡. Such were their reflections. "All creatures," they said with Denis the Carthusian, "are beautiful, as all are good: all partake of the divine eternal and uncreated beauty §." But how can any one describe the peace and harmony which existed between the sons of God and all these innocent and lovely creatures!

"No longer now the winged inhabitants
That in the woods their sweet lives sing away
Flee from the form of man; but gather round
And prune their sunny feathers on the hands
Which holy hermits stretch in friendly sport
Towards these dreadless partners of their play.

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* Desguerrois, Hist. du Diocèse de Troyes, 90—102.

† S. Bon. Compend. Theol. Verit. lib. iii. c. 2.

‡ Id. lib. i. c. 1.

§ Dion. Carthus. de Venustate Mundi, i.

All things are void of terror. Man has lost
His terrible prerogative, and stands
At peace with nature."

On Montserrat the birds used to fly round the hermits and feed out of their hands. When in the forests of Luxeuil the wild animals used to fawn upon St. Columban, Iona says, "I have often heard Chamnvaldus, Bishop of Lyons, who had been his minister and disciple, relate that when in the woods with him, he used to see beasts and birds coming to him. The little animal which men call squirrel used often to leap down from the high branches, jump on his neck, creep into his bosom, and eat out of his hand*. Thus the text of old historians justifies the poet's fancy.

" ——— He would linger long
In lonesome vales, making the wild his home,
Until the doves and squirrels would partake
From his innocuous hand his bloodless food,
Lured by the gentle meaning of his looks;
And the wild antelope, that starts whene'er
The dry leaf rustles in the brake, suspend
Her timid steps to gaze upon his form †."

Orderic Vitalis says, that at the voice of St. Guthlac, the hermit of Croyland, the birds of that uncultivated solitude, and the fish wandering through the stagnant waters, used to hasten to receive food from his hand: In the presence of the venerable Wilfrid two swallows perched and sang upon his arms, knees, and breast: he used to place straws in the spots of his cell where he wished the birds to build their nests ‡. St. Hugo, after he was Bishop of Lincoln and until his death, retained the qualities of the solitary religious man. There was a wild swan in the marshes which used to fly round him, eat out of his hand, and put its neck in his bosom. When he was absent it used to signify his return three or four days before, by an unusual mode of flying and crying over the waters. The bird continued these habits for fifteen years; but on the death of the saint it resumed its wildness and its dolorous notes; and though it survived him many years, it would never again seem to know any one *. Friar Vincent of Flaviano, a holy Capuchin, was remarked for his tenderness to birds and beasts. When at Cortona he found a bird in the woods with its legs broken; and he contrived with quills to bind them up, and then covered them with some of his juniper oil, which he used as a medicine for sick persons; and when he had restored the poor bird to soundness, he set it free again. It was often observed how animals used to fawn upon him, as if recognizing their especial friend †. From the inclemency of the weather diverse creatures seemed instinctively to seek shelter with the hermit, who so well had marked how God remembered the animals that were with Noah in the ark. When evening came and the storm gathered from the mountains, many of the tribe of birds would hide themselves near him in the woods, while dogs howled and hideous tempests tore down trees. Herons, exhausted by their flight across the sea from Ireland, used to be received by St. Columba on Iona, and nourished till they had strength to fly away again ‡. St. Bartholomew of Whitby was a hermit on the island of Farne. In such reverence was he held, that the mariners would at any time embark if he encouraged them. From the time of St. Cuthbert down to the thirteenth century, when it became the site of a Benedictine cell, this island was never without hermits, chiefly from the convent of Durham. "From the most ancient times," says the old historian, "this island has been frequented by a certain species of bird. At the time of nest-building there they congregate. Such is the tameness they derive from the sanctity of the place, or rather from those who by their residence in it have sanctified it, that they will allow themselves to be seen and touched by man. They love quiet, yet are not disturbed by a noise: they prepare their nests remote from the islanders. Some hatch their eggs close by the altar; and nobody presumes to hurt them, or even to touch their eggs without permission. With their mates they seek their sustenance in the deep. Their young as soon as hatched follow their mothers;

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* Vita S. Columb. Auct. Iona Bobiensi ap. Act. S. Ord. S. Ben. tom. ii.

† Shelley.

‡ Lib. iv.

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* Dorlandi Chronic. Cartus. lib. iii. c. 6.

† Annal. Capucinorum, 1573.

‡ Adamni Scoti de S. Columb.

and when once they have swum over their hereditary waves, they never return to the nest: the mothers, too, forget all their recent tameness, and recover their wildness with their genial element. Once as a duck was leading her new-hatched offspring towards the sea, a young one fell into the fissure of a rock. The bird stood still in such sorrow that no one could then doubt of her having feeling. Instantly she returned to Bartholomew and began to pull at his tunic with her beak, and he rose, thinking that she was seeking her nest under the place where he was sitting. But the bird still continuing to pull at his garment, he was at length convinced that she had some meaning which she wanted organs to express. So he went before and she followed, until they came to the rock, and moving to the brink he saw the young duck adhering with its wings to the side of the rock, and descending he restored it to its mother. Whereupon being much delighted she looked as if she were thanking him. Then with her young she entered the water, and Bartholomew returned to his oratory *." "The eider, or, as the islanders call it, St. Cuthbert's duck, is still found there. In the summer of 1818," says a late writer, "I saw one of them hatching her eggs in a stone coffin overhung with nettles, among the ruins of his hermitage. It grieves me to state, that since that time their numbers have been considerably diminished, their eggs have been broken, the soft lining of their nests taken away prematurely, their young destroyed, and they themselves wantonly shot by the crowds of idlers who every summer visit Farne and its sister island."

Alas! then it seems that the whole creation has suffered from the banishment of the holy men to whom it was so dear. The unerring text proclaims that the creature groaneth and travaileth with pain through the effects of man's first fall; and here is a corroborating fact, attested by experience, that it has inherited increase of misery from his last prevarication; for now abandoned by all protectors, cared for by none except for gain, stript of the inviolable character with which it was so long invested by men restored to grace, it is the unpitied victim to that "detested sport that feeds upon the sobs

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* Apud Bollandist. Acta Sanct. Junii.

and dying shrieks of harmless nature." Truly, in relation to the war against all monks and hermits, which has ended nearly in their extirpation, one may exclaim with the poet,

> "Garden of God, how terrible the change
> Thy groves and lawns then witness'd."

From partial cruelty they had been never, indeed, wholly free, since the bitter fruit was eaten; but while hermits could be found in the woods, animals had protectors somewhere; while there was such a thing existing as a hermit's cell, there was a spot in which every hunted creature might have peace. Albertus of Sienna, the celebrated anachorite of the twelfth century, on the mountain of Turricellana, from whose family the most noble houses of Sienna date their origin, is represented in old miniature paintings caressing a hare which he holds in his arms; for he used often to save hares when pursued by hunters. He died in 1151, after spending twenty-seven years in solitude*. The persecution and the pain that man inflicts on all inferior kinds was always a theme descanted on to ears attentive by the gentle anachorite, who is represented moralizing the spectacle, like melancholy Jacques weeping and commenting upon the sobbing deer. The seraph of Assisi used to expostulate even with those who plied the slaughterer's trade, and say, "Why do you torture my little brothers the lambs, binding and suspending them so?" It is strictly hermit's language which our poet speaks to one who answers, "I have but killed a fly."

> "But? How if that fly had a father, a mother?
> How would they hang their slender gilded wings,
> And buzz lamenting dolings in the air?
> Poor harmless fly—
> That with his pretty buzzing melody
> Came here to make us merry,
> And thou hast kill'd him †."

Goerres remarks that the power and protection of these holy men extended even sometimes over plants and flowers ‡. But we must depart. In fine, the whole world experienced their sympathy; sounds in the air they heard, which spoke the love of all articulate beings: gems and minerals, or the fruits and flowers of the earth were in some degree related to them, as having been created by the common Father from the dust of the ground: they loved, they admired, they discerned a soul of goodness in all things round them. Such men our mountains and our forests saw—visited by angels and shaded by the boughs of Paradise. O scenes surpassing fable, and yet true, scenes of accomplished peace!

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* Annal. Camaldul. lib. xxix.

† Tit. And.

‡ Die Christliche Mystik, ii. 222.

"I deem it superfluous," says St. Augustin, speaking of the hermits, "to prolong this discourse; for if such an eminent degree of sanctity does not appear worthy of respect and admiration, how can my words persuade men to the contrary *?" It is a curious fact, that even the Saracens evinced reverence for the Christian hermits, as the edict of the false prophet Mahomet Adallah can bear witness. "If a Christian priest or hermit," says the decree, "should retire to any mountain, grotto, plain, or desert, I will be in person behind him, as his protector against all enemies." But in addressing Christians in the middle ages, one might well say with St. Augustin, that it would be superfluous to exhort them to venerate solitary religious men. When it was rumoured that Pope Innocent XI. intended to suppress the hermits of Camaldoli in Poland, and to employ their funds in carrying on the war against the Turks, a solemn letter of remonstrance was addressed to him by the princes Palatine and nobles of Poland, interceding for these hermits. "It cannot be expressed, holy Father," say they, "what a sensation this rumour has caused throughout the kingdom; for such is the affinity between the Poles and the white-robed children of St. Romuald, that they cannot be torn from these hermits, without the most cruel wound being inflicted on themselves; for the fewer hermitages there are in this kingdom, so much the dearer are they to us. It would be grievous that the mildest of men, the most modest of religious persons, separate from human society, and not even enemies to the beasts in the woods, should be driven away; and indeed the army would not receive their spoils without horror." This remonstrance is signed by Stanislaus, Prince Lubo-

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* De Moribus Eccles. Cath. 31.

mirski, Grand Mareschal of Poland, Christopher Pazzi, Grand Chamberlain of the Duke of Lithuania, Michael Pac, General of the Lithuanian army, Stanislaus Potoschi, Casimir Sapieska, and many other nobles, besides bishops *.

Let us hear how Andreas Mugnotius, a Spaniard, describes the desert and hermits of Camaldoli, on the Tuscan mountains; for his language respecting them, when writing to Pope St. Pius V., is but a faithful expression of the impressions which such scenes and such men produced upon all former Christian generations. This desert of hermits appeared to him one of the most admirable things in Italy. "The cells of the hermits," he says, "are decently provided with all things necessary to life. O with what delight do they cultivate their little gardens, sweet with the odour of flowers! How one is soothed by the solemn beauty of the surrounding forest! This is indeed the generation of those who seek God, who serve Him assiduously on His holy mountain. These men, enkindled by the zeal of the Christian religion, direct all their deeds and words to one object,—God, the supreme diffusive good. These are true adorers of Christ, without guile, imbued with the simplicity of the dove and the prudence of the serpent,—men of most profound humility, thinking themselves the most abject of all; for he who is the greatest among them esteems himself the least. No discord or inequality can be found amongst them. To others, humane and gentle, lovers of charity, true in word, clean in heart, just in conscience, and eminent in all discipline of virtue. Far are they removed from all seditions, loquacity, mockery, murmurs, lies, adulations, irreverences, immodesty, dissimulation, detraction, hatred, intemperance, idleness, sloth, vain glory, hypocrisy, profane conversation, curiosity, effeminacy. O sacred desert, desert of deserts! more than five hundred years have elapsed from thy erection to these times, and, with wondrous immutability, thou continuest to bear the fruits of immortal life! O fruitful mother, that dost produce such a long successive line of holy children, heirs of the kingdom of God! Amongst the saints now dwelling in this place, many are aged sires, with venerable beards white as the driven snow, whose looks alone are

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* Annal. Camaldul. lib. lxxviii.

enough to induce the beholder to enter upon the way of heavenly life. Two, especially eminent, have of late been here,—two great lights of the desert, Samuel and Silvanus: the latter profound in sacred erudition, and both admirable in holiness; under whose discipline Ambrose Moncata, a youth of that most ancient and illustrious ducal family of Moncata and Cardona of Spain, despising the pleasures and riches and honours of the world, in the flower of his age, has chosen this solitude as his place of rest. Here, too, Father John Baptist, of Novara, who had formerly been an illustrious warrior amongst the nobles of the world, became a true soldier of Christ, and spends his life in the desert. Cornelius has past more than twenty years in solitude here, with whom, when it was permitted me to speak, such delight did I receive from his venerable aspect and from his pious and affecting admonitions to a Christian life, that I thought I should have not heard any thing more impressive from the tongue of the holy Serapion himself. All the others, too, are men mindful of the celestial beatitude. Seven times each day and night they meet together in the church, to offer prayers and hymns to God, with holy ceremonies and seraphic devotion. No showers, or snows, or wild tempest, or vehement cold, can prevent them. And, oh! on seeing them leaving their cells, and passing in the obscure night, carrying torches in their hands, to say matins in the church, who would not suppose that he beheld the ancient fathers of the desert that we read about! I was told that Catherine de Medicis, through desire of seeing this sacred place, disguised herself in man's apparel, and, with one of her intimate associates, entered and inspected the place; but that being struck with remorse on seeing that she had incurred an anathema, she went to Rome and confessed what she had done to the pope, who granted her absolution, on condition that she would, at her expense, cause to be erected a splendid little cell in the desert; which she did, and had it adorned with magnificent stones. Silvanus told me that Eleonora, the wife of Cosmo de Medicis, had obtained permission from Pius IV. to see and behold the place; but that he had gone down to meet her as far as the first of the wooden crosses, and had prevailed upon her to abandon her resolution, and not transgress so ancient and venerable an institution. Nevertheless she offered them precious cloths to adorn their church."

In the sixteenth century, Christopher Marcellus, Patriarch of Venice, describes his visit to this desert in an eloquent letter to a friend. "Certainly," he says, "there never was a place which entices men more strongly to newness of life than this desert. I can say what I experienced myself: for to you I cannot pass it over in silence. When I began to ascend the mountain, and the whole aspect of the wilderness developed itself before me, I call God to witness that my heart was struck and moved to compunction; and I felt as if a divine voice had sounded in my ears, saying, 'This place is holy: put away thy sins.' Now, if the place itself hath a divine power thus of converting souls to the blessed life, and of inducing them to renounce the ways of the blind world, what shall we say of the most holy customs of the men inhabiting it,—of their most chaste manner of life, of their most pure discourse, of their most holy prayers? No; I cannot adequately express to you what love I felt for the place at the first sight,—how I was soothed at the aspect of these vast obscure woods of pine, and how I seemed to inhale from the air of the place religion and innocence: for these objects of the natural divine order move men to meditate on mysteries, and confirm them in the blessed life. Methinks one might moralize on the fir-tree itself, which seems in every part of its construction a fit emblem to teach perfection to the humble. Here I considered the changes of the right hand of the Most High: here I saw men who had once enjoyed all that riches, honours, nobility, pleasure, art, and fame, could yield, who were now humble, poor, and stripped of every thing. Amongst whom that Petrus Quirinus came into my mind,—one of the first men in letters and genius, and now no less eminent for sanctity, whose pious and blessed memory moved me to tears. A companion of his solitude was Paulus Justinianus, a man of equal nobility, not much inferior to him in genius; but in wealth, before his conversion, greatly his superior. He, through desire of a better life, dwelt in this happy desert. This is what I have to say to you, my dearest friend, respecting the joy and tranquillity of mind which I experienced on visiting this most sacred and celebrated desert of Camaldoli *."

Thus, with all the heart, and with that tongue which

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* Annal. Camaldul. tom. i. Append.

speaks the same in all, men used to extol this life of holy solitude, the tranquillity of eremites, the calm of the desert. Michael Angelo says, writing to Vasari, "I have felt, my dear George, such pleasure on the mountains of Spoleto, visiting the hermitages which are scattered there, that I have brought back to Rome, as it were, only the half of myself. Ah, truly it is in the woods alone that we can find freedom, felicity, and peace!"

Thus wrote philosophers during ages of faith,—when, led by a lofty genius and profound, they repaired to hermits upon mountains, down whose hallowed steps none ever descended without mounting them again,—such was the urgent will of all that they might receive some sprinkling from the influence of their sacred dews. Never were hearts in such devotion bound, and with such absolute complacency disposed to render up themselves to God, as when the holy anachorite was visited: for then the everlasting pleasure that did shine so fully in their countenances contented the gladdened soul,—then sweet Love, apparelled thus in smiles, diffused through the intelligence those sparkles which are enkindled by holy thoughts, to which men gratefully referred whatever Genius lifted them above the vulgar. So entire the love with which they held those lives of hermits,—for writing which St. Jerome said that Homer would have envied him,—that it eclipsed in oblivion the creations of the artist, and the sciences of the school. St. Thomas used to study their history, and meditate on their conferences, as related by Cassien; saying, that the memory of their spirit inspired him with devotion, and enabled him to rise more easily to speculation. "Ego in hac lectione devotionem colligo," said he, "ex qua facilius in speculationem consurgo." But the esteem for this kind of holy life gradually diminished in proportion as faith declined, and the character of men, as of nations, lost its strength. "So long," says the last historian of St. Gall, "as the people were conscious of possessing themselves an interior moral force, they believed the possibility of its existence in other men; and valued this mode of dying to the world, partly as an example of high self-command of taking up the cross to follow Christ, and partly as the operation of a deep conviction, and of an all-subduing faith. But when they no longer felt themselves strong for moral efforts, they ceased to believe that others were capable of making them, and loved rather to persuade themselves that such strength had its origin in an aberration of the intellect *." They no longer knew or could be made to feel what it is to have heaven thus brought down to earth, to live in the presence of God, and to share the sympathies of all his creatures.

But we are now clear of the forest; and the present age comes back to us with all its lawlessness and contempt for ancient things in consonance with the peaceful order everlastingly ordained. Blame me not if I have no longer words that are not borrowed from the bard †, who had a heart and vigour to endure all great transitions; for down through the world of infinite mourning lies straight the way before us. Already we can hear the noise and discern the dust in whirlwinds, of which Plato spoke, along the broad and public way. The banners of the world's monarch do come forth towards us from the great city heaped with envy to the brim, which now we may not enter without grief; for how will the din of earth grate harshly on our ears when we have once heard plain the harmony of heaven? The arch-heretics are here, accompanied by every sect of their followers, equivocating to darken and perplex the way of peace; while others, sensual, denying and blaspheming God's high power, and nature, with her kindly laws, contemning, restlessly are driven about, as if that she-wolf which Dante saw, was at their heels, which, in her leanness, seemed full of all wants; as if their lot was to be haunted by that fell beast, and never to enjoy peace; for not all the gold that is beneath the moon, or ever hath been, of these toil-worn souls, may purchase rest for one. Methinks we are now eyed by each, as at eventide one eyes another under a new moon. Now we see truly how brief, how vain, are all the goods committed into Fortune's hands, for which the human race keep such a coil. Alas! the question here is not of tranquillity and order, of deeper and deeper calm; but I am unwilling to cast a gloom over the termination of this course, which has hitherto only led us towards all that is innocent and serene, by alluding to the causes which, after disturbing the religious state of the christian republic, destroyed

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* Geschichte des S. Gall, ii. 205.

† Dante, Carey's translat.

the sanctuaries of peace every where, or by bringing into comparison with the peaceful men of secular and monastic life during ages of faith, with whom we have been conversing in these two last books, the society of later times. This must indeed be done hereafter; but now I am as one that makes no pause, but presses on his road whate'er betide him. Reader, a company with whom we may not sort as yet approaches. I commend these recollections to thee, wherein monks and hermits may survive. Some reflections on this sad contrast will form an appropriate commencement for the next book, where perforce we must become acquainted with the discord of the actual world, and all the ignoble work beneath the sun; while meeting those who never cease from troubling the faithful, either by insinuating disorder under all the ever-shifting phases of the rebellious principle, or by persecuting them, like those who first diffused the precious seed, unrelentingly for their justice.

END OF THE TENTH BOOK.

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